POLICING TROUBLE:
AN OBSERVATION STUDY OF POLICE PATROL WORK
IN TWO POLICE FORCES

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SUMMARY

This is an ethnographic study of police patrol work. Its central concern is to explore how patrol work is socially constructed by the organisational actors performing this task – the uniformed police constables.

The thesis is divided into three main sections: Part One, as a whole, provides a critical exposition of the relevant literature. Chapter One examines the emergence of a sociology of the police. Chapter Two advances a "realist" conception of police work through an examination of previous literature, leading to a critical discussion of the various definitions of policing in Chapter Three. Chapter Four argues that the patrol officer's work world is best understood by examining the interrelation of three primary themes: the occupational culture of the lower ranks, the organisational milieu in which the constable works, and the specific environment in which policing takes place.

Part Two argues that the primary concern of patrol officers is the avoidance of trouble, both from the public they police and from the organisation in which they work. This theme is taken up in Chapter Six which seeks to explore the tensions that arise from this central concern with trouble and how it results in the peculiar configuration of working rules and practices.

In Part Three, attention is focused on how patrol work is performed on the street. The first chapter starts with an examination of the communications system and how it affects patrol work. In Chapter Eight we empirically examine the resources which patrol officers utilise to achieve control of incidents. The final chapter explores how officers resolve the incidents with which they are called to deal.

A methodological appendix is attached which details how the study was carried out and the ethical implications arising from such a study.
This thesis is dedicated to all my teachers especially Frederick John Norris (1926–1986).
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements ............................................ vii  
Preface ..................................................... ix

## PART 1. THE SOCIOLOGY OF POLICE WORK: THE LITERATURE

Chapter 1. THE SOCIOLOGY OF THE POLICE: TOWARDS A SOCIOLOGY OF POLICING ..................................... 2  
* Traditional Criminology................................. 2  
* The Interactionist School............................... 4  
* The Rise of the New Criminology........................ 7  
* And the Fall............................................. 13

Chapter 2. THE SOCIOLOGY OF THE POLICE: TOWARDS A REALIST VIEW OF POLICING ........................................ 19  
* The Police Mandate: Rhetoric........................... 20  
* The Police Mandate: Reality............................ 24

Chapter 3. TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF THE POLICE: THE SEARCH FOR THEMATIC UNITY............................... 28  
* Legitimacy................................................. 29  
* Force....................................................... 30  
* Order....................................................... 32

Chapter 4. POLICE WORK: ORGANISATION, OCCUPATION AND ENVIRONMENT ...................................... 36  
* Organisational Analysis & The Occupational Culture ................................................................. 36  
* The Occupational and Organisational Milieu of Patrol Work ...................................................... 40  
* Organisation and Environment: Information and Uncertainty..................................................... 43  
* The Environment: Policing People....................... 48

## PART II. THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF POLICE PATROL WORK

Chapter 5. THE TERMS OF TROUBLE: VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR......................................................... 55  
* The Terms of Trouble..................................... 57  
* People: Racial Categories.................................. 60  
* Police Racism: A Discussion............................... 62  
* People: Political Categories............................... 69  
* Behaviours That are Indicative of Trouble................ 73  
* Strategies for Avoiding Trouble........................... 79  
* The Consequences of Trouble............................... 86
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Of course, for the failings that remain, I alone am responsible.

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My entry into the backstage world of policing has been marked by events which, although outside of my control, have had a significant impact on both this study of police work and police work itself. The day that I started fieldwork in Surrey, the PSI report on policing in the Metropolis was published. That evening, the banner headline in the London Evening Standard read: "Racist, Sexist, Drunken says their own report" - not an auspicious beginning for a researcher who, from that day, was living in a police section house and trying his best to neutralise the negative and, to some, threatening, image of being a student of sociology!

Some six months later, I started work at another fieldwork site, this time in the Met. On my second day, another Standard headline brought news of a more tragic policing event: "Wounded Policewoman Dies in Hospital", read the headline; below, the text read, "WPC Yvonne Fletcher from C division was killed while on duty at a demonstration outside the Libyan Embassy. Two bullets hit her in the stomach ..... The shots came from inside the Embassy." (17 April 1984). For the next few weeks, the station was run by a skeleton staff as so many officers were taken to provide cover at the Embassy.

Both these events accompanied and gave impetus to major changes in the administration of the Metropolitan Police. In the Autumn of 1985, the management structure was significantly decentralised with the creation of eight districts covering the whole of the Metropolitan area. Each district was given substantially increased autonomy from central control. In 1986, after a major review of the Force's capacity to handle large scale incidents and serious public order disturbances, it was decided to disband the Special Patrol Group which had always been centrally controlled and, also, the locally based Instant
Response Units. In their place, each new district was to have a Territorial Support Group which would combine the functions of the disbanded units.

On January 1st, 1984, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act was passed through Parliament. The provisions of this Act significantly altered the powers and procedures used in every day police work.

What effect these changes will have on patrol work is yet to be seen. Although, not wishing to dismiss their significance, particularly the decentralisation of managerial responsibility, the evidence from this study suggests that, in the short term, the effect of these changes will be minimal.

1984 saw other events which had a more day to day effect on the nature of policing during my fieldwork. The anti-nuclear missile protests at the American airbase at Greenham Common and, more importantly, the coal dispute, both resulted in a massive and prolonged drain of 'manpower' from the stations in which I was working.

Fuelled by these factors, the political debate surrounding police accountability to Local Authorities was also becoming increasingly heated and vociferous.

Such was the turbulent nature of the political and policing environment during the period of my fieldwork. However, these factors provide the backcloth rather than the foreground of this study. While history was playing out its course, patrol work continued unabated and this is a study of that work. Emergency calls were still answered, officers still stopped those they regarded as suspicious, continued to issue traffic citations and helped find lost children.

Accordingly, the focus of this study is on the routine aspects of day to day patrol work. It seeks to elucidate the manner in which such work is structured, understood and achieved by uniformed police constables. It attempts to see the environment which is policed and the organisation in which policing is carried out through the eyes of the patrol officer.

A necessary component of this task, was to suspend my
judgement about what I saw and heard, particularly when I found it personally distasteful. I, therefore, did not seek to criticise what I witnessed, either at the time or in this report. Some may condemn my approach as blinkered, one-sided and offering legitimacy to beliefs and practices which they, themselves, condemn. My reply is that such an approach would have prevented me from the task of trying to unravel how policing is actually achieved. I believe, and others are at liberty to disagree, that, if any significant changes are to come about in the practice of policing, they will have to appreciate and take into account how that work is performed and the values and beliefs of those who carry it out. For, otherwise, a lack of understanding will lead to inappropriate and ineffectual reforms which will have more effect on the rhetoric of policing than on the reality itself. If this sounds like an apology from someone who has been hoodwinked or "gone native", then what follows serves as my denial.

A note to the reader.

For reasons of anonymity, the areas in which I worked have been given pseudonyms. Kimberley refers to the two Metropolitan research sites and Fakeston to the one in Surrey. As this is not a comparative study when I have talked about force organisation I am referring to the Metropolitan Police unless otherwise stated. Where data is not specifically attributed to a particular research site, it may have emanated from either. Of course, the names of all persons and places have been changed.
PART I

THE SOCIOLOGY OF POLICE WORK: THE LITERATURE
Chapter 1

THE SOCIOLOGY OF THE POLICE: TOWARDS A
SOCIOLOGY OF POLICING

Any commentator on the police is immediately faced with a minefield of political, epistemological and theoretical disputes. This is hardly surprising. The history of sociology itself is rent with disagreements about the nature of power, authority and social control (Lukes, 1978). The police institution, central to the control apparatus of modern industrial societies, cannot be insulated from such debates. Indeed, the debates frame the very issues that are raised, the questions that are asked and answers that are posited. Within criminology, it is possible to discern four major positions from which the police institution has been approached: Traditional, Interactionist, Radical and Realist. To a degree, they each represent an historical development from one phase to another. However, breaks are never clean cut, strands survive, positions merge and diverge.

Traditional Criminology

Traditional criminology largely ignored the police, accepting their role as self evident and non problematic. Mannheim's major text book on criminology, published in 1965, has no discussion on the police institution and, as late as 1970,
Hood and Sparks' 'Key Issues in Criminology' manages but nine pages on the law enforcement process. (Mannheim, 1965; Hood and Sparks, 1970). This absence of attention on the police in echoed Britain the American experience of the nineteen forties and fifties. Essentially, criminological theory was concerned with why men broke the law. Neither law, nor enforcement seemed relevant to this discussion: Merton's Anomie Theory (1938); Sutherland's Differential Association (1956); Cohen's (1955) and Cloward and Ohlin's Strain Theory (1961), all share the same problematic (Box, 1981). Humans were regarded by nature as conforming creatures, so that some special event had to intervene to lure the naturally obedient into committing criminal acts; whether it be associating with the wrong types, or failure to achieve at school, the commitment to conventional values was presumed to have lessened.

It was assumed that the relationship between the police and the law was symmetrical. Criminology paid little attention as to how and why criminal sanctions came to be invoked by the police against certain kinds of behaviour and not others. Nor did it ask whether sanctions were applied equally to individuals engaged in similar infractions. In fact, even where this problem was raised by Merton (1938) or Terrance Morris (1957), they asserted that police records did, in fact, adequately represent the distribution of criminally sanctionable behaviour, specifically that of the lower classes. Attention was not, therefore, focused upon organisational policy or the practice of enforcement.

In Britain, the treatment of the police was informed by an implicitly consensual or social pathological perspective on those whom they policed (Cf: Reith, 1938; Hart, 1955; Critchley, 1978). As Brogden (1981) points out, these provide a 'history from above' and as such miss out the conflictual role surrounding the development of the Police, since they are unable to theorise class based conflict (Brogden, 1981: 208). It was not necessary for these commentators to theorise the role of the police beyond that of a civilising institution, as the relationship between the police and the state was seen in terms of a naive pluralist
model: the police merely functioning as the impartial agents of the state, neutrally implementing the law.

The police institution was either ignored or seen as non-problematic in Traditional criminology. The decisive break was heralded by the publication in 1963 of Howard Becker's "Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance". Although the ideas were not new, Lemert (1951) had been saying much the same a decade earlier, the result was a radical re-orientation of the criminological agenda, both in scope and in method.

**Interactionist Sociology**

The schism which Becker's work precipitated did not occur in a vacuum. American sociology itself was undergoing a major re-orientation. The natural science model of American positivism, committed to a more or less deterministic causal account of social life through quantitative research techniques, was increasingly under attack. The movement is probably best summed up by the title of Homans' paper "Bringing Men Back In" (1964), although the groundwork for the attack was laid in Dennis Wrong's article "The Oversocialised Conception of Man" (1961). In Kuhnian terms, a paradigm shift was occurring; although not one that would ever be complete, since the nature of the problem ultimately rests on two competing sociological traditions, one of system and the other of action (Dawe, 1970). Becker's simple and even trite assertion that "Deviant behaviour is that which is so labelled" signalled a radical recasting of the criminological agenda. What had previously been taken for granted was now up in the air for debate and examination. A torrent of questions emerged. By focusing on deviancy, the remit of the studies was widened to include rule and norm infraction, and not just infractions of the criminal law. This inevitably raised questions as to why and how some deviant acts were seen as criminal while others were not, and implicitly raised the possibility of analysing why some social groups were able to assert their power in order to criminalise others.
Due to methodological and theoretical preferences, the main focus of attention became the process of definition that individual actors brought to bear in particular situations. The rates of deviant behaviour were seen to be produced by the actions of persons within the social system who define, classify and record behaviours as deviant. These actions themselves were seen as worthy of study and therefore attention was directed to the role of the agencies and agents of the social control system. From this perspective, deviant behaviour is that which is organisationally defined and processed as abnormal by particular actors in the social system who have the power so to define (Kituse and Cicourel, 1963).

The police were identified as the most powerful group of definers and thus their role in the process of creating and sustaining deviant definitions through the application of negative sanctions became highly pertinent. Further, the police are the 'agency' through which the most consequential of deviant labels are applied, criminal sanctions. As the word 'agency' suggests, they are active in producing these definitions and, as such, they are produced through the interaction with those who can be potentially labelled. From the Interactionist point of view, it is, however, not the quality of the act that is important to understanding deviancy, but the label that is applied to the act and, therefore, police definitional practices must become open to scrutiny.

If such practices were to be opened up it also required a methodology to suit. The tools of positivistic quantitative sociological research were fashioned to provide answers to questions stemming from macro-sociological issues. What Becker, Hughes and Wrong, among others, were asserting was that such concepts were misconceived in sociology and criminology alike. The project of bringing 'meaning' back in brought with it a distrust of treating society as a reified object. Social life is constituted in the flux and flow of everyday life. It is emergent, and its outcome cannot be determined without detailed observation. Douglas speaks for the tradition as a whole when he
maintains:

Life is too immensely complex, too uncertain, too conflictual and too changing for any set of abstract and predefined rules to specify activity that will have results seen as adequate to the individual actors (Douglas, 1970: 20).

Instead, they were methodologically committed to reproducing scenes from social life as experienced by their participants. The task was therefore limited and yet broad in scope. Limited because it demanded detailed, or, to use Geertz's phrase, "Thick Description" (1973) of particular social phenomena. The aim was modest, not on a plane with high sociology to produce grand theory, but to produce partial accounts. They were necessarily partial because the sociologist could not claim any privileged access to knowledge, and also because the riches and diversity of the social world demanded respecting the integrity of the differing meaning systems found within it (Rock, 1979).

If such a task was limited in its aim, preferring middle range concepts such as 'career', it was broad in the range of phenomena it could study. The social world of the jazz musician (Becker, 1963); that of the poolplayer (Polsky, 1967); of casual homosexual encounters, (Humphreys, 1975); and of the subterranean world of the receiver of stolen goods (Klockars, 1974) all became the subject of intensive situated study. So too did the police. At first, situational studies emerged of police / public encounters, informed directly by the central concern of labelling. This, mainly American research, focused on such aspects as the police and juveniles, (Piliavin and Briar, 1964; Werthman and Piliavin, 1967) or on the relations of the police with the under-classes, (Bittner, 1967; Chapman, 1970) and, although such studies continued, they gave way to more detailed organisational studies. Skolnick's "Justice Without Trial", (1975) Rubinstein's "City Police" (1973), and van Maanen's work on police socialisation, for instance, (1973, 1978a)
substantially uncovered the police organisational and occupational cultures.

As Sherman notes (1980), the result of opening up the police to sociological gaze was indeed a substantial increase in the knowledge available about policing. The sociological abstracts list 75 articles published between 1959–68, and between 1969 and 1978 the volume increased fourfold to 323. However, once Pandora's box was opened, the central concerns of deviancy theory, although still influential, gave way to new issues. The police became interesting in their own right and studies emerged on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Rise of the New Criminology

In Britain, at least, the sociology of the police almost failed to emerge. In fact, in twenty years, there have only been six major first-hand studies of actual police practice: Banton (1964); Cain (1973); Manning (1977); Chatterton (1975); Holdaway (1983); P.S.I. (1983). Of these Cain and Bantons' fieldwork was carried out in the early nineteen-sixties. Manning's work is based on limited observation, but grounded in his vast American experience. Although Chatterton's Ph.D has not been published, there are a number of insightful papers available by him, albeit spanning observation work of more than fifteen years.

Holdaway suggests the reason for this hesitant emergence is fourfold. First, unlike in the U.S.A., there was no major institutional research initiative from the Home Office or the criminological institutes. Second, there was a reluctance among British sociologists to spend lengthy periods involved in fieldwork. Third, the police themselves were not particularly amenable to being researched. Finally, the "New Criminology" altered the criminological agenda making such studies seem marginal (Holdaway, 1979: 1-13).

It seems to me that it is this last point which is most pertinent. The issues originally raised by Becker, — in lay
terms, who makes the rules, who breaks the rules and who enforces the rules — were recast and the emphasis shifted from enactment to inception. As a result, a new set of problems emerged and a new methodology and epistemology were called into play, demanding such macro-sociological concepts as class, state and society. For the interactionist, such concepts were viewed as illegitimate since they were static, independent variables. The Interactionists' conception of social structure was dynamic and inter-subjectively constituted. In this they follow Shutz and Weber in emphasising that the reification of everyday concepts like state and society, individual and class must be avoided. Social abstracts must be reduced to their concrete social core, as Weber states:

......in sociology concepts like "state", "co-operative", "feudalism" and similar ones, in general designate categories of specific kinds of human interaction; this is its task to reduce them to 'understandable actions' and this means without exception, the actions of specific individuals. (Weber, cited in Wagner;1973).

The important point here is that "we must avoid postulating 'society' again as an abstraction vis a vis the individual" (Marx, 1973: 137) as this merely reifies human actions into monolithic structures.

For Taylor, Walton and Young this position leads to a "bracketing away" of the "social totality" which produces deviancy (1973: 208). They therefore turned their attention, and that of British Criminology as a whole, towards constructing a Marxian theory of deviancy. Similarly, Cain (1979) has argued that a political sociology of the police failed to emerge due to the myopic vision of those theorists who concerned themselves with the police. Because they grounded their explanations in the organisation and generated low level propositions about the nature and variety of police institutions, they were unable to
move beyond the organisation as a unit of analysis. For Cain, interactionist studies, including her own, were blinkered. They were merely the icing on the cake and failed to examine what the police role was. Although Cain is right in suggesting that a fully political sociology of the police did not emerge, she is surely wrong in laying the blame at the feet of a handful of organisational theorists, particularly in Britain. Radical criminology itself precluded the answer, along with practically every other question that might be interesting to ask about the police in their role as police.

In the early work of the New Criminology (Taylor, Walton & Young, 1973/1975) the emphasis of their critique of existing criminology was that it had failed to ask or to answer the question of who rules and why? This gave greater emphasis to Becker's original question and located the answer in political economy (Taylor, Walton & Young, 1973: 270). It was assumed that there was an identity between the economic base and the various state agencies. This is an instrumentalist version of the state, with the police, the education system, and so on, seen as nothing more than the tools of the dominant class. As Jock Young makes clear in his latter day self-critique: "The institutional structure is seen to be a seamless web of institutions which are unambiguously supportive of capitalism." (Young, 1979: 14). There is, then, an isomorphic relationship between the dominant class, the state and its institutions. This being the case, there is no need to actually examine the process which generates crime control.

This position is exemplified in Young's work on drug takers and the police in the Notting Hill Gate area of London (Young, 1971). Using a model of deviancy amplification adapted from Wilkins (1971), Young argues that social control by the police served to amplify and increase drug use. In Young's account, however, the police as actors are absent. They are straw men pushed and pulled by forces outside of their own control. In the absence of any concrete actors, agency seems to rest with the unspecified effect of the media, with the drug takers responding
to an abstract and undefined social reaction.

The mission of the New Criminology was taken up by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, then under the directorship of Stuart Hall. As Downes & Rock (1982) point out, "Policing the Crisis" (Hall, 1978) is the nearest to the fully social theory that Taylor, Walton & Young demanded in their New Criminology. Hall et al develop a more sophisticated version of the relationship between the state, its functionaries, and the dominant mode of production. In fact, its authors criticise the earlier radical criminology for having ".....no theory of the state...(and that)....state power through the operation of law is acknowledged only formally, and its mode of operation is treated as unproblematic." (Hall, 1978: 194).

The problem of isomorphism is confronted by recourse to Gramsci, and the structuralist Marxism of Althusser and Poulantzas. The state is conceived, not as the direct expression of the dominant class interest, but as the site of the struggle between the classes. It is "relatively autonomous" from the dominant class, continually in flux and only determined in the last instance. When the relationship changes between the classes, so will the constellation of forces represented in the state. At present, the key shift has been from the dominance of private capital to that of monopoly capital, with the state, therefore, having to play an increasingly interventionist role. Thus differing economic stages give rise to a varied reaction on the part of state agencies. However, such intervention cannot be conceived as occurring because of a correspondence between the mode of production, the form of state and the character of law; because of the "uneven character between the differing levels of state and social formation" (Hall, 1978: 197).

When interventions do occur, it is either through the ideological state apparatus (e.g., the educational, religious, welfare and media bodies) or through the repressive state apparatus (e.g., the police and the army). It is, of course, more convenient if the reproduction of labour, and the production of consent can be achieved at the ideological level, as Hall et
The capitalist state functions best when it operates normally through leadership and consent for then the state was free to undertake its more educative and ethical role, drawing the whole edifice of social life progressively into conformity with the productive sphere (Hall, 1978: 207).

The mechanism for this is hegemony, the power of a dominant class to project its own peculiar way of seeing the world so that this is accepted as part of the natural order of things by those who are in effect subordinated to it. It is on this level that "Policing the Crisis" operates, and, as such, it is not actually about policing, but the manufacturing of a false consensus through the ideological state apparatus. Mugging becomes the vehicle through which the state seeks to promote unity and justify the interventionism required by monopoly capital.

There are numerous problems associated with such a position; not least that there can be no empirical disconfirmation of the thesis. If the police adopt an increasing militaristic role or if over night they all became 'community bobbies', the result would be the same, merely the most convenient way of achieving hegemony. The result is that police work is hidden from view, and known without looking. This is no accident, because crime and its control are seen as epiphenomena which reside in the world of appearances, whereas the real explanation for crime must be found in the world of essences. The phenomenal world gives way to the noumenal (Rock, 1979). The ultimate result of such a position is that:

There is no 'Marxist theory of deviancy' either in existence, or which can be developed within orthodox Marxism. Crime and deviancy vanish into the general theoretical concerns of Marxism (Hirst, 1975: 204).
Young, in partial rejection of his early position, has termed the dominant trend as "Left Idealism". The central tenet is that social control is maintained by a series of "coercive institutions structured together in a functional fashion" (Young, 1979: 13). As we have seen with the Gramscian theory of the state, coercion can be manifest or latent, and the distinction is irrelevant because the potential is always available. Coercion is equally present in the manufacture and maintenance of false consensus, whether by the school, the welfare agencies or the police. Behind the velvet glove, lies the iron fist: if the former is unsuccessful, the latter can always be used. As Young states in relation to the New Criminology, its stress is on:

...the illusionary nature of appearances: that consensus masks coercion: that crime statistics are a sheer fiction hiding the criminality of the rich: treatment is a cloak for punishment: the universality of law is a rhetoric which hides particularism (Young, 1979: 16).

The result is that attention on the police has not been fostered. It is not necessary to try and map out what police work is actually about or how it is achieved since the result is the same. If a patrol officer uses various non-coercive resources to achieve a task, say to diffuse a potentially violent disagreement by using tact, diplomacy and humour, (Fielding, 1984) this is of little interest. That somebody may have attained a criminal record, and perhaps lost a potential job because of the failure of an officer to successfully negotiate a non-coercive resolution to the conflict, is likewise deemed as irrelevant.

The New Criminology has not, however, had an altogether negative impact on the sociology of the police. It has focused attention on the relationship between the police and the state, forcing a rethink about police neutrality in relation to law and crime control. It has also raised issues about the ideological nature of present police practices in criminalising the poor (Box, 1983: 13). With this preamble in mind, it is now necessary
to turn away from history and to examine the synthesis and integration which has occurred to make possible what I have termed a realist position on the police.

...And The Fall

The unwieldy and heady structures of radical criminology, despite its initial promise of providing an account of deviancy which incorporated it into the social totality, has gradually given way to less ambitious projects. Impetus has come from both interactionist (Rock, 1979), and less stringent structuralist critiques (Brogden, 1982). The result has been a re-interpretation of the theory of the state, an end to epistemological imperialism, and the possibility of methodological pluralism. E.P. Thompson captures the shift in emphasis when he writes:

If all law and all police are utterly abhorrent then it cannot matter what kind of law or what place the police are held within, and yet the most immediate and consequent struggles to maintain liberty are exactly about kinds and places, cases and precedents and the bringing of power to particular account (Thompson, 1978: xi).

Brogden, following Thompson's injunction, provides the most sophisticated attempt to locate the police in relation to the state. In a careful historical study he empirically demonstrates that the Chief Constable, and thus the police as a whole, is largely autonomous from the Home Office, parliament, the legal system and the local state. He therefore introduces the concept of the urban manager, drawn from the work of Pahl (1975). However, unlike Pahl in his earlier work, he insists that the role must not be conceived of as an independent variable, thus giving rise to complete autonomy, but as a constrained role. It
is constrained by the complexity of the peculiar conjunction of historical, economic and ideological forces at any given time, thus giving rise to relative autonomy.

The Police Chief as urban manager is seen as having to arbitrate between the competing demands of various groups in formulating policy (Brogden, 1982: 30). Of course, not all arguments are given equal weight, and the job of the Police Chief is to filter the 'legitimate' from the 'illegitimate' demands. As Brogden notes:

His legal status as a constable under common law grants him unique discretionary powers. When combined with his legal knowledge necessary to his managerial function he has considerably more independence as a resource provider in the local area than any other urban manager (Brogden, 1982: 95).

While radical criminology moved from instrumental to structuralist accounts of the state, the realist approach has shifted from structuralist to a sophisticated pluralist model, while still retaining some of the features of structuralism. Crucially the concept of relative autonomy has been retained, although stripped of its predictive status; it has come to be used more as a descriptive label. As Saunders suggests in a different context (Saunders, 1981: 278), the concept of relative autonomy, although removing the problem of isomorphism, replaces it with the "two opposing principles which cannot be supported by counter-factuals " (Saunders, 1981: ibid). This is to argue that the state supports the long term interests of monopoly capital while at the same time responding to pressure from the subordinate classes. However, unless it can be specified in advance when the contradictory pressures on the state will be resolved, there is no possibility of disconfirming the thesis (Saunders, ibid).

The importance of this critique is that the state, and its agents, have become structurally differentiated at the
theoretical level and there is no longer a "presumed homogeneity of influence...by a homogeneous ruling class (Cain, 1979: 157). Such a position, therefore, implicitly raises questions about the level of structural co-respondence - between the police, the state, and the dominant economic class - which can no longer be taken for granted. Isomorphism has been rejected because it is possible to utilise an alternative position, "which recognises a diversity within the state", (Cain, ibid) and thus allows for a political intervention which, "appropriately organises pressure upon it in the interests of greater democracy" (Cain, 1979: 151).

Coming from different, if not hostile traditions, Young from structural Marxism (Taylor, Walton & Young, 1973), and Cain, from the interactionist school (1973), have both arrived at roughly the same position (Cain, 1979; Lea & Young, 1984). They are both of the firm belief that incursions can be made into the state and its apparatus to bring them under democratic control. Underlying their position is a vision of the state as an arena to be captured by particular groups or classes, to be held and cajoled into dispensing favours to sectional interests. For both of them the group that must do this is the working class. The importance here is that they see these gains as real; not just the icing on the cake, but substantive (Lea and Young, 1984: 260-261).

Inevitably, the academic concerns of developing a political sociology of the police has led to a fusion of interest between those wishing to interpret the police institution and those with a desire to change it. The gauntlet thrown down by Cain to extend and develop the emerging political sociology of the police (i.e. Bunyan, 1977; Hall, 1978; Reiner, 1978) has been met with a flurry of studies on: the technology of policing and surveillance (Manwaring-White, 1983; BSSRS, 1985); the policing of public order (Bowden, 1978; Cowell, Jones & Young, 1982; Fine & Millar, 1985); the police and the state (Brogden, 1982); the politics of policing (Baldwin and Kinsey, 1982; Reiner, 1985) and accountability and the police (Hain, 1979, 1980; Jefferson and Grimshaw, 1984).
In many respects this has been a major advance, as the uncritical assumptions of the traditional criminology have been thoroughly routed, the limited concerns of the interactionists have been broadened, and the theoretical impasse of the New Criminology has been superseded by a return to the phenomenal world. The central concern with all these studies has been with the process of democratising the police through the vehicle of police accountability. The debates surrounding the accountability arguments are in themselves complex; however, there are four major positions from which accountability has been broached:

a) Existing law should be used to force Chief Constables to act in particular ways.
b) Existing police authorities should use their residual powers.
c) There should be changes in law to make police authorities responsible for determining general police policy.
d) That local communities should be given control of policing (adapted from Jefferson & Grimshaw, 1982: ch5).

All of these proposals fail to provide an adequate model of how the police could be brought to account, primarily because they fail to understand the distinction between being accountable to law and being accountable to an electorate. In recognition of this, Jefferson & Grimshaw propose that the solution is to provide an elected body with judicial standing whose purpose would be to provide, "policy instructions to officers in respect of a general duty to uphold the law" (1982: 175).

Jefferson & Grimshaw's arguments withstanding, there are limits as to how far accountability arguments can be taken. In all the positions including their own, there is an assumption of symmetry between official organisational policy and the implementation of that policy. There has been no attempt to take on board the implications of the various studies of the police
organisation. As Fielding argues (Fielding, 1981), while senior officers may embrace the demand for some form of accountability, guarding against its more zealous proponents with a rhetoric of professionalism, the perennial problem for the police organisation is still how to achieve control of the lower ranks in implementing organisational goals. Thus, if a Chief Officer and his management team accepted the position of those to whom they were made accountable, implementation at street level would still be problematic. Jefferson denies the reality of this problem, preferring to see organisational rule breaking as in the interests of senior officers. This flies in the face of a growing body of evidence from observational studies of the ingrained conflict between managerial and street level cultures (Holdaway, 1983; Ianni, 1983). Further, as Kelling has stressed, even internally generated change has a tendency to revert to 'business as usual' in a short time, (Kelling, 1983).

To provide answers to such problems it is necessary to bridge the gap between macro and micro-sociology which has dogged criminology for much of its history. As McBarnet argues, it is really a false dichotomy: "For a full explanation of how law is enforced then, substantive law, legal structure and the state must be added to moods and bureaucracies and face to face interaction". However, she adds, "...structural analysis is the corollary to and the context for, not a replacement of, interactional analysis." (McBarnet, 1977: 31-32).

If the accountability arguments are to have any clout they must be able to illustrate how their proposals will affect the day to day practices of policing. However, as Fielding notes, "in the long run it may well be easier to reprogram the technology than the manpower " (Fielding, 1981: 93). In itself this may be viewed as desirable, restricting the police use of motorised patrol, cutting down the emphasis on public order training, and resisting police demands for more expensive and sophisticated technology. However, arguments about accountability go further, for they suggest that there will be a
qualitative change in the relationship between the police and the policed in a locale. If this is the case, it is necessary to examine what the police do, and how they achieve it.
There are two related and fallacious assumptions common to the law and order and civil liberties lobbies. Both emphasise law enforcement as the central police function, and adopt a rational deterrence model of classical criminology, albeit at different stages of the argument (Reiner, 1985: 171).

The central position that has not been addressed is what are the police for, and it is to this question that I now wish to turn. In 1964, the Royal Commission, for the first time since the inception of the New Police, reviewed the original police mandate, and although they extended it, they hardly changed the basis of the original formulation. The police have a duty to: maintain law and order and to protect persons and property; to prevent crime; they are responsible for the detection of criminals and for the interrogation of suspected persons; they have a duty to control road traffic and to befriend anyone in need (Abridged from Critchley, 1978: 309-310). What this does not include is any clue as to how such goals should be achieved, which are, in themselves, second order questions to which the police organisation jealously guards the right to formulate the solutions (Critchley, 1978: 228; Brogden, 1982).
The Police Mandate: Rhetoric

The police mandate is imbued with tensions because its primary function, as presented by the organisation itself and the media - the control of crime - is impossible to achieve. The forces which generate crime and deviancy are materially and ideologically outside of its control. The result has been the increasingly sophisticated use of presentational strategies to secure support for the organisation which, in its own terms, was seen to be failing (Reiner, 1985: ch 5). During the 1960's and 1970's the problem of police ineffectiveness to limit the growing crime rate was presented as one of manpower shortages (Mark, 1978: 137). As establishments came up to strength in the 1980's, with rising unemployment and a 40% pay rise, the crime figures still continued to rise. The organisational rhetoric was quick to shift gear, with the police admitting that they could not control crime. As Commissioner Newman expressed in 1983, "Crime statistics are just as much a reflection of the performance of other social agencies as they are of police performance." (Cmd: 8928; 10).

The result of such contradictions, then, is the development of presentational strategies (Manning, 1977: ch 5), amplified by the media (Chibnall, 1977), aimed at smoothing over the gaps between rhetoric and reality. If tensions exist at the level of primary goals, then, they are replicated and transformed within the organisation with the development of second order goals. These result from accommodations reached within the organisation about how to achieve their specified objectives enshrined in the police mandate. Given that the primary objectives are hard, if not impossible, to achieve, there is an increased pressure for second order goals to displace higher ones.

For instance, as Jones illustrates, although the police organisation espouses the principles of preventative patrolling, either on foot or by car, as being the backbone of the police
service, in reality the function is starved of manpower, organisational commitment and status (Jones, 1980). Even so, the organisation must, and does, develop strategies for the accomplishment of particular goals. However, these are selectively filtered and transformed into those which can be most easily measured and thus provide the organisation and the police manager with a handle with which to monitor organisational activity. Preventative strategies receive little priority; instead, arrests, process, recorded stops and tickets issued, tend to become the primary, individual, departmental and organisational indicators of success. (PSI, 1983: Vol iv).

The development of second order goals, such as the setting up of divisional information units, dedicated communications functions, targetting and surveillance squads, etc., tend to be related back to first order goals through the mechanism of figures, either in terms of the crime rate or crude indicators such as police activity (PSI, 1983; Vol iv: 307). Organisational choices have to be made about the distribution of manpower and resource allocation between specialist units. Inevitably such choices are political. However, organisationally, they are presented as neutrally responding to (reified) crime figures. It is known that differential enforcement strategies have an unequal bearing upon particular groups and classes, (Cf, Stevens & Willis, 1979). Carr-Hill & Stern's (1979) sophisticated analysis of official crime statistics, where they relate to a number of demographic variables, illustrates that, "At the level of police practice there is some discrimination which either protects or shields particular social groups or takes them as prime targets." (Carr-Hill & Stern, 1979; 258). Further, one of the most important variables is the size of the police force in relation to the size of population, and this plays an important part in the determination of the offence rate and clear up rate (ibid; 256). In other words, the more police there are, the more recorded crime there will be. This would make little difference if the impact of policing was distributed evenly across different social classes. It is not. Policing is concentrated in poor
inner-city areas, such as Toxteth, Lambeth and Hammersmith, with their attendant transient populations, composed mainly of a fragmented working class and ethnic minorities (see, Policing London, 1982: no 2,6).

Policing is focused on particular types of crime, and therefore, on particular classes and areas (Cf, Box, 1981). Although such choices are presented as one dimensional, determined by the crime rate, they have the effect of increasing the criminalisation of particular sub-sections of the population. This leads to the police engaging in a form of circular argument. Manpower is decided by reference to crime figures, (Cf Bunyard, 1978: 107, for the formula); therefore, more police will mean more crime, and this in turn will mean more police (Ditton, 1979). This is an important point to bear in mind because, depending on one's level of analysis, different answers emerge to the problem of discrimination. In Donald Black's study of police/citizen encounters which takes the primary unit of analysis as the individual encounter, he could find "...no evidence that the police discriminate on the basis of race " (Black, 1980: 105). In Great Britain the PSI report made the same point with regard to the Metropolitan Police (PSI, 1983: vol; iv, 125-128). To view discrimination merely as an individual psychological state is to oversimplify the issue, for it is embodied in the differential levels of manpower and resources allotted to particular places and functions. Police officers may or may not enforce the law neutrally, but the police organisation certainly does not.

The reality of organisational practice gives rise to unequal policing, resulting in the criminalisation of particular sub-groups. As Box (1983) notes, it is hard not to see definitions of serious crime as ideological constructs, since they are not related to the most serious offences. In terms of harm, injury, suffering and economic loss, price fixing, the non implementation of safety at work legislation and fraud have far greater consequences. In effect they relate to a "subsection which is more likely to be committed by young, poorly educated
males who are often unemployed, live in a working class impoverished neighbourhood and frequently belong to ethnic minorities" (Box, 1983: 13).

The police, along with conservative British and American criminologists, maintain, without due regard to the contrary evidence (Cf, Box, 1983), that lower class crime is by far the most destructive of social life. Thus, Wilson argues: "Predatory street crime does not merely victimise individuals, it impedes and, in extreme cases, even prevents the formation and maintenance of the community" (Wilson, 1975: 21). Or, as Morgan states: "Delinquency has now ceased to be merely a symbol of urban breakdown (if it ever was)...and has become a major contributor to it" (Morgan, 1978: 21).

The representation of the police as neutrally responding to crime is tenuous. The selective use and disclosure of information through the media results in particular events being filtered out and others highlighted. Thus a framework is generated which allows otherwise unrelated and unconnected incidents to be welded together into a crime wave. Crime waves are always about street crime and can be seen as one of the mechanisms by which legitimacy for unequal enforcement is manufactured (Fishman, 1979; Hall, 1978; Cohen, 1972; Brogden, 1982). Criminal justice, therefore, becomes elevated into a 'community service', and "...it is presented as being above politics and dispensing justice for all, irrespective of class, race, sex or religion - this further legitimises the state and those whose interests it unwittingly or otherwise furthers" (Box, 1983: 14).

Political tensions are resolved at the level of ideology. However, other tensions result from the interpretation of the received mandate which casts the police as primarily concerned with law enforcement, the prevention of crime and its discovery. As Manning argues, the mandate is received by a very traditional managerial and organisational structure, and seen as an essentially technical problem. The police do not concern
themselves with a theory of crime causation, but believe that increases in manpower, information flow, and response time will lead to decreases in crime and increases in arrest (Manning, 1979b: 706).

The Police Mandate: Reality

It is now necessary to examine the data for the claim that the mandate is impossible. Although the information relating to Great Britain is not voluminous, it is sufficient and consistent enough to draw some general conclusions about the nature of police patrol work, specifically in relation to the image of the police as law enforcers, and preventors and detectors of crime.

Ironically, the majority of police work is not related to law enforcement. Punch's study of calls for police assistance in three East Anglian towns revealed that between half and three quarters of all requests for assistance were for service rather than law enforcement functions (Punch & Naylor, 1973). Eckblom & Heal's study of incoming calls to a subdivisional control room confirmed Punch's earlier findings. Only 18% of calls required the preparation of a fresh crime report and calls relating to "plight" made up by far the greatest proportion of demand (Eckblom & Heal, 1982). In Punch's terms, the police represent a "secret social service". It is secret because the outcome of the majority of the incidents rarely enter into the official records of the police organisation; in essence, since they do not generate crime reports they are lost from view (McCabe & Sutcliffe, 1978). These findings are consistent with numerous American studies which also illustrate that the majority of calls for police assistance are not crime related (Cumming & Edel, 1965; Bercal, 1971; Webster, 1973).

If a different measurement device is used, that of task analysis of how patrol officers spend their time, then even smaller proportions of police activity are shown to be directly related to law enforcement. A study by Comrie & Kings (1974)
of the police services research unit, shows that, in both rural and urban settings, only about 6% of a patrol officer's time is spent on incidents that are finally defined as criminal. The accumulated evidence from various ethnographic studies confirms, and gives colour to, the broad range of non crime related activities that the police are called to deal with (Banton, 1964; Cain, 1973; Holdaway, 1983; PSI, 1983: Vol iv).

If police work is not directly related to law enforcement and crime control, it is often argued that the presence of patrols on the street has a deterrent and preventative function. Clearly the police service supports this view as some 40% of patrol officers' time is spent on random and uncommitted patrol (Comrie & Kings, 1974). Studies of both car and foot patrols tend to disconfirm the deterrent effect of patrolling. Both British and American data confirms that, although some patrol presence is necessary to deter potential offenders, the precise number of foot or car patrols makes very little difference; it is only when patrols are removed completely that reported crime increases (Bright, 1969; Kelling, 1974).

This is hardly surprising since foot patrol officers are only as effective as far as their eyes can see and ears can hear, and, for that matter, so are car patrol officers. As Clarke and Hough point out in their review on the literature on police effectiveness.

Given present burglary rate and an evenly distributed patrol coverage, a patrolling policeman in London could expect to pass within a 100 yards of a burglary in progress once every eight years and even then not realise that the crime was taking place (Clarke & Hough, 1984: 7).

To become a real deterrent the level of patrolling would have to be increased to a point where the chance of detection was a high probability, which is not an economically feasible proposition. Further, burglars are well aware that the
likelihood of being caught is low; therefore, any realistic increase in the level of foot patrol would be liable to have little effect, (ibid).

It was for these reasons that the government Working Party on Manpower, Equipment and Efficiency (Home Office, 1967) recommended the introduction of unit beat policing with the primary aim of a swifter response to calls for assistance and complaints. Unfortunately, the theory behind rapid response generally failed to take into account the length of time that callers take to contact the police after they have discovered an offence. Eckblom & Heal's (1982) study illustrated that over sixty percent of callers had delayed at least five minutes before calling the police and Beick & Kessler's study in the USA (1977) illustrated that over fifty percent of people took between twenty and forty minutes before calling the police, victims often discussing with relatives and friends what action they should take before calling. Quite clearly, rapid response is severely limited in its effectiveness by the delay between incident and reporting.

Contrary to the popular mythology surrounding police investigations which portrays them as involving painstaking detective work; piecing together disparate clues to put a name to an unsolved crime, the police are highly dependent on victims and witnesses for the identification of offenders. Burrows and Tarling's (1982) study of records drawn from three metropolitan police forces illustrates that the police are responsible for discovering either directly or indirectly about fifteen percent of crime. There now seems to be a general consensus of research findings that the public is responsible for solving between eighty-three and eighty-five percent of cleared up offences, (Steer, 1980; Mawby, 1979; Bottomley & Coleman, 1981).

Generally, if the offender is apprehended it is either because they are caught red handed or because a victim or witness can name the person who committed the offence. When the police do not have such information, the possibility of detecting offenders is very low. Perhaps this is best illustrated by the
case of the Yorkshire Ripper manhunt which, by July 1979 months before he was caught, had involved 500 police officers, 250,000 officer hours and had cost over three million pounds. (Nicholson, 1979).

In summary, then, we can say that the police have little effect on the prevention of crime, spend little of their time dealing with it and do little to discover it. Having examined what the police do not do it is necessary to turn our attention to what it is that they actually do.
Chapter 3

TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF THE POLICE
THE SEARCH FOR THEMATIC UNITY

As I have noted earlier, any discussion of policing is faced
with problems of definition, partly as a result of
epistemological disputes, but also arising from the confusions
and contradictions apparent in the received police mandate;
glossed over by the police reliance on presentational strategies.
However, there are also more tangible reasons for the confusion
which is borne out of a recognition that the reality of police
work does not fall neatly under any conceptual umbrella. The
literature on patrol work is replete with dichotomies which try
and capture the range of tasks and styles that can be used to
categorise police work: social service versus crime work,
(Punch & Naylor, 1973); "shit work" versus "real work", (PSI,
1983: Vol iv); "peace officer" versus "enforcement officer",
(Banton, 1964); "proactive" versus "reactive", (Reiss, 1971);

By relying on dichotomies to describe the police function,
discontinuity at the phenomenal level is reproduced at the
conceptual, and thus theoretical unity which might merge the
disparate activities under a single banner is lost. Rock (1973)
coherently argues in his chapter on the enforcement of laws, that
there is indeed a functional unity to all the various police
activities which are teleologically related to the primary goal:
"...of being responsible for the boundary patrolling tasks of a
system of social control. They control those deviances which
are proscribed both by external law-giving institutions and by their own law-interpreting behaviour" (Rock, 1973: 174).

**Legitimacy**

To perform this primary task, there are subsidiary functions which facilitate the implementation of first order goals, and these are what Rock terms, "...the incidental and unintended consequences of police work" (Rock, 1973:184). Thus, the range of non-crime-related tasks that the police find themselves involved in, for instance acting as marriage guidance councillors in domestic disputes, are a necessary price for the police, "to continue to function as effective agents of control" (ibid). The involvement in these subsidiary tasks is a mechanism which enables the police to perform their primary control function without undue recourse to coercive measures, by cloaking the office in a shroud of legitimacy. Further, such interventions enable informal contacts with the community, resulting in an increased information flow about other, more serious infractions. Thus, the "coercive role style is tempered with a benign complexion" (ibid); therefore, coercive power is transposed into legitimate authority by the diversity of tasks that the police are prepared to engage in.

While Rock is right in stressing the legitimation function of diversity, there are less certain grounds for his assertion that it is the quest for legitimacy which unifies the social service functions with that of law enforcement. The distinction between the two types is far less sharply drawn than many commentators would have us believe. The practice of policing evolves as the structure or each particular interaction unfolds; it is not predetermined from without, but structured from within (Van Maanen, 1978b:224). Thus Chatterton describes how essentially similar infractions result in differing outcomes depending on the style of the officer and the demeanour of the subjects, with arrest being the result of an officer failing to
negotiate a social service definition on a particular incident rather than anything intrinsic to the incident itself (Chatterton, 1983). Also, in reactive policing, officers have little power to determine what they are called to deal with; the structure of patrol relying heavily on the public's definition of normative order in weighing up whether to call in the police.

**Force**

The police are called into a variety of situations which may or may not be viewed as part of their primary function, but it can only be decided during or after the event, not before it. The process by which criminal sanction is invoked, whether formally or informally, will be dependent on how the officer reads the situation and what resources are used to provide a solution. This may or may not involve the use of coercion but the crucial point is that the distinction between incidents necessitating the use of coercive force and those that do not is false. It is in recognition of this that Bittner proposed an alternative definition of policing which aimed at unifying police practice at the level of coercion.

For Bittner:

...the role of the police is best understood as a mechanism for the distribution of non-negotiable coercive force, employed in accordance with the dictates of an intuitive grasp of situational exigencies" (Bittner, 1978: 33).

While Bittner notes that the police rarely use force in encounters with the public, he maintains that this does not undermine the fact that it is a resource that can be used if police procedure is opposed. The justification for the use of force, as he rightly points out, cannot be derived from any external prescription but from particular readings of particular
situations. Thematic unity is provided by the fact that the solutions to the problems that the police deal with potentially or actually require the use of force. As Bittner notes:

...this lends homogeneity to such diverse procedures as catching a criminal, driving the mayor to the airport, evicting a drunken person from a bar, directing traffic, crowd control, taking care of lost children, administering first aid and separating fighting relatives (Bittner, 1978: 38).

Bittner's definition has been highly influential in providing a basis for analysing patrol work. However, by equating the police role with the use of force, it has led many commentators to underplay the use of other resources at the police officer's disposal for achieving particular ends. Essentially, this again raises issues about the nature of power. In Bittner's formulation all power is exercised on the basis of the coercive potential of the applicant. However, this clouds over the distinction between legitimately perceived authority and coercion. People comply with a host of social rules not because there is a threat that coercion will be used against them if they transgress, but because to a greater or lesser degree, they accept the legitimacy of the rules. As Box argues, the surprising aspect of deviancy is not how much but how little there is, and this is a reflection on the efficacy of social control, exercised through socialisation, in binding people to the conventional moral order (Box, 1981: ch 4). Police officers' mandate to act authoritatively in situations is often implicitly and explicitly accepted as legitimised by the public (Cf: Wiley & Hudik, 1974), even by those on whom negative sanctions are applied (Matza, 1969).

Power has two sides, and in this sense its exercise can be seen as a form of interaction (Simmel, 1964; Arendt, 1970), in which there is reciprocity between the super-and sub-ordinate. While the actual use of coercion represents the loss of
reciprocity, its threatened use does not; it is merely that the subject is not prepared to undertake the sacrifices which result from its use. The other side of the successful mobilisation of power is compliance which can be categorised under three dimensions (Etzioni, 1961), alienative, utilitarian and normative. Each derives its power from a different source: alienative from coercion; utilitarian from the transfer of socially scarce resources; normative from the acceptance of the authority of the super-ordinate as legitimate.

By making power and force equivalents, Bittner has made the other resources at a police officer's disposal subsidiary. As the PSI report notes (1983: Vol iv) "...the great majority of police officers habitually try and avoid using more force than is necessary." (opcit, 173). Even in arrest situations the police rarely resort to coercion to secure compliance. Nor is this only true of British policing, in Reiss' study over 90% of arrests were managed without recourse to gross force; i.e., physical coercion, threat or handcuffs (Reiss, 1968).

Order

Like all definitions, Bittner's can be justified neither theoretically nor empirically but only by recourse to its heuristic value, and, in failing to differentiate between the different sources of power, the definition obscures the diversity of strategies used to achieve compliance, (Muir, 1977; Bittner & Bayley, 1983; Fielding, 1984). The question still remains, to what degree can we find conceptual unity? As we have seen, most incidents that the police involve themselves in do not end up with a crime report being filed, nor do the police have much effect on either the prevention or detection of crime. In the light of this, Ericson proposes that:

The mandate of police patrol officers is to employ a system of rules and authoritative commands to transpose
troublesome, fragile situations back into a normal or efficient state, whereby the ranks of society are preserved....(and)....Therefore the patrol police are essentially a vehicle in the reproduction of order (Ericson, 1982: 7).

The importance of this is that it allows thematic unity, as does Bittner's definition, but without prejudging the resources that are used to reconstitute order. It locates the police firmly as the guardians of the status quo. However, by focusing on reproduction, the question of order is made problematic; it is not merely transmitted but, "...continually worked at through the process of conflict, negotiation and subjection." (Ericson, 1982: 7).

Unity is derived at the level of function rather than of technique. The police are seen as restitutive in the variety of situations that they encounter, but the definition is not imperialistic in specifying 'whose' order. As Sykes & Brent note, the police are often called into situations not as 'enforcers' of a public legal conception of order, but as 'reinforcers' of localised private normative conceptions of order. This results because people confuse their "private informal order with the formal legal order" (Sykes & Brent, 1983: 28). In this situation legal sanction is often inappropriate. Donald Black, in his chapter on dispute settlement, (Black, 1980: ch 5) illustrates that people call the police because the resources they possess for the resolution of conflict are insufficient. In the majority of these incidents, police officers are called to act as conciliators to try and reconcile conflicting parties. Chatterton's work (1978 & 1983) has shown that, where a private normative order has been exceeded, not a legal one, officers have a variety of resources at their disposal. Particularly, they can use their considerable discretion to engineer a situation where a more substantial infraction can be invoked, and thus provide the opportunity for legal resources to be brought to bear.
In proactive encounters, as well as reactive ones, the officer utilises normative standards applied to temporal, spatial and informal social orders (Sacks, 1978). Thus, in dealing with a situation, an officer decides what, if anything, is out of order, and uses the various resources at his or her disposal to reconstruct it. Since there are a multitude of informal orders, officers have considerable latitude in determining whether an intervention is justified and what such interventions should consist of. While an event may threaten their own value systems, it may not be legally proscribed and, while it may be legally proscribed, it may not challenge the normative system of the local moral order. Police officers may turn a blind eye to drunken driving which is legally proscribed, but may apply the law strictly in relation to the possession of small amounts of marijuana. Discretion is a central part of a police officer's mandate. This allows for selectivity in both what to involve oneself in and what resources to utilise when seeking compliance. As Ericson notes, these cover a wide range, including:

...the authority of his office, his procedural legal power to detain, search and the use of physical force, his substantive legal powers to charge and various manipulative strategies that form part of the recipe knowledge of his craft. In short he 'negotiates order' variously employing the strategies of coercion, manipulation and negotiation (Ericson, 1982: 9).

Police work, then, is not primarily concerned with criminal law enforcement but the more vague and less concrete problem of the reproduction of order. Following Manning, (1977,1979a), Ericson maintains that:

...the work is always carried out with respect to rules, including legal rules, administrative rules and the recipe rules of the occupational culture of line officers. In other words it is the work of producing and
controlling deviance, of using social rules in the construction of the social order. (Ericson, 1982: 9).

The patrol officer is an active user and interpreter of rules. These rules, however, are not transposed from the ideal to the actual, nor is it the case that legal rules take precedence over administrative or occupational. Rules have to be situationally applied. For the patrol officer, whose work is often only tangentially related to criminal law enforcement, organisational and occupational constraints are as important in guiding action. Even where the invocation of legal rules is necessary to reach a desired outcome, they are still applied by organisational and occupational factors. Accordingly the next chapter will examine how these rules provide both a constraint and a resource for achieving the ends of routine patrol work.
Organisational Analysis and the Occupational Culture

As with all organisations, the factor which separates the neophyte from the old-timer is the ability to articulate actions in the light of a situationally relevant reading of organisational rules and procedures. Organisational rules are not merely transposed from theory to practice, they are mediated at various levels which transform their meaning and import. While the formal organisation gives rise to a set of rules, for both practice and justification, the appropriate invocation of rules requires a second order system. As Strauss et al. have demonstrated, there must be rules for using the rules (Strauss et al., 1963). This second order rule system derives from the organisational culture and is transmitted through a period of occupational socialisation which neophytes must undergo to gain the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organisational role (van Maanen & Schien, 1979: 211).

Such a position requires a particular reading of organisational life because, implicitly, it places the concept of culture as the central feature of organisational analysis (Astley & Van de Ven, 1983). Historically this has come about through a
re-emergence of the "action frame of reference", favoured by Weberian sociology and more recently re-introduced into British sociology by Goldthorpe's 'Affluent Worker' studies (Goldthorpe et al, 1968). Pitting themselves against the technological determinacy of the previous generation of writers (Blauner, 1964; Woodward, 1958), they introduced the notion of "orientation to work". It was argued that the subjective features of the work situation had been treated as overdetermining. Instead, worker behaviour and the understanding that they brought to their work were acknowledged to be a result of the complex interaction between work structure and worker biography.

Unlike the human relations school (Mayo, 1949) which tried to locate subjective meaning in terms of individual psychological need, the action approach saw it as socially generated. Attention moved away from structural determinism and psychological reductionism and turned towards examining the social processes generated in the work situation itself. Drawing on the phenomenological perspective (Schultz, 1972; Berger & Luckmann, 1966), the problem of organisational sociology became, "the manner in which the everyday world is socially constructed yet perceived as real and routine" (Silverman, 1970).

A problem emerges from the rejection of structural determinism and psychological reductionism. If organisational behaviour is not to be explained in terms of external and constraining forces, or by reference to universal human needs, what is it then that gives rise to the consistent patterning of human behaviour? The answer may be arrived at through a synthesis of phenomenology and post-Wittgensteinian philosophy (Winch, 1958; Giddens, 1976), which treats social life as rule-governed rather than law-governed, where such rules can be conceived of as arising from the fabric of inter-subjective meanings or, in other words, from culture.

As Berger & Luckmann note, for meaning to become inter-subjective, reciprocity and exchange have to be established; this is achieved through the process of externalisation, objectification and internalisation (Berger &
Luckmann, 1966: 78). The movement between these three processes results in the objectified world being "...reabsorbed into consciousness and that the structuration of this world comes to determine the subjective structures of consciousness itself" (Berger, 1967: 15). There is therefore a dialectical interplay whereby action determines consciousness and consciousness determines action.

Culture is a universal human phenomenon. However, its particular configuration results from the peculiar problems that differing social groups face. As Ford (1942) suggests, "culture is a traditional way of solving problems" or a "learned solution to problems", but there is no central or agreed definition of culture. Kroeber and Kluckholm (1952) found some one hundred and sixty definitions in the literature, and by way of synthesis conclude:

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit of symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consisting of traditional (ie historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may on the one hand be considered products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements for further action (Kroeber & Kluckholm, 1952: 2).

A major application of this perspective has been recent organisational studies. Smircich illustrates, (1983a) that organisational analysis has been influenced by five major perspectives of culture. Following Goodenough's cognitive view (1971), and Geertz's symbolic conception (1973), she proposes the following definition of organisational cultures:

The emergence of social organisations depends on the emergence of shared interpretive schemas, expressed in language and other symbolic constructions that develop
through social interaction. Such schemas provide the basis for shared systems of meaning that allow day to day activities to become routinized or taken for granted (Smircich, 1983b: 160).

Organisational reality is, then, constructed individually and through social interaction, and members actively participate in the creation and re-creation of meaning. In the light of this, Smircich reminds us that, "...human actors do not know or perceive the world, but know and perceive their world through the medium of culturally specific frames of reference" (Smircich, 1983b: 161). It cannot be assumed that the organisation has homogeneous meaning structures which inform and guide action. Organisational managers, for instance, do not have a monopoly on the development of meaning, although they often act as if they do. Others in the organisation are also active in producing and shaping organisational reality through the meanings and interpretations that they bring to their work world. Indeed, in hierarchical organisations there is a greater likelihood of a disjunction between the two:

Thus the organisational strategy favoured by a dominant coalition may be countered by rival frames of reference and poorly implemented by accident or design. (ibid)

This is highly pertinent to police organisations, and it is therefore necessary to examine the way in which the peculiar problems faced by the lower ranks gives rise to a patterned and culturally held solution which informs the everyday practice of policing.
The Occupational and the Organisational Milieu of Policing

The patrol task is structured and ordered through the interaction between the organisation, occupation and environment in which it is located. It gives rise to the peculiar structuration of working rules that are contained in the occupational culture. The ascendency of the occupational culture over other forms of structuration arises from the paradox that, in police work, discretion tends to increase towards the bottom of the hierarchy. Indeed, the perennial problem for the police manager is how to control the lower ranks. Even under the 'fixed point' system discussed by Chatterton (1979), there were considerable opportunities for easing behaviour which, as he illustrated, were tolerated as long as they were covered by a 'good story' if something should go wrong and they should be called to account. James' study (1979), illustrated how senior managers responded to rising levels of street crime by setting up a specialist squad to operate in accordance with the professional ethos of senior management. Within a matter of months, however, the squad had managed to subvert the organisational goal of professional policing and replace it with practical policing.

This autonomy is compounded by three factors outlined in the PSI Report. First, frontline supervisors do not see it as their job to interfere on the level of the street activities of their officers. Second, senior managers, i.e. inspectors and above, rarely stay at a station for more than two years so that there is little time to build up a team, comprehensive objectives, and personnel management. Third, P.C.'s are therefore taught by other P.C.'s and informal work practices are passed on through the peer group rather than the organisation (PSI, 1983: Vol iv, 274ff).

The problem of supervision is not just a technical matter, but relates to the legal position of the constable. Summing up in the case between Fisher and Oldham Corporation in 1930, the judge stated:
Now the powers of a constable, *qua* police officer, whether conferred by common law or statute law are exercised by him by virtue of his office and cannot be exercised on the responsibility of any person but himself.... A constable, therefore when acting as a peace officer is not exercising a delegated authority but an original authority (in Critchley, 1978: 271).

The police constable is legally autonomous and therefore his or her immediate superiors cannot instruct him or her as to what to do in a given situation, since discretion is an integral part of the office. Supervisors can and do recommend, suggest, threaten, and cajole their officers with informal and formal organisational sanction, that they should deal with a situation in a particular way. But, as Chatterton has shown: "A P.C. could legitimately respond - 'sorry Sergeant. That may be your way of dealing with such an incident but the way I did it was just as good" (Chatterton, 1981: 26).

Finally, the ascendency of the occupational culture is given further weight by the nature of the work that they deal with. Most situations are not one dimensional but often ambiguous and confusing, open to various interpretations. Police work is always situationally contingent. This is reflected in the organisational mandate. There are rules about dress, courtesy, conduct etc. but these do not dictate how officers should or should not act in a given situation. Police work continually involves discretion (Lambert, 1970) and the practice of policing evolves as the structure of each particular interaction unfolds. (van Maanen, 1978b: 224ff).

The patrol officer's decision to act in particular circumstances is therefore dictated by a situationally informed, culturally defined reading of organisationally and legally proscribed rules. The principal concern of the officer is the avoidance of negative sanctions from either the organisation; in the form of disciplinary proceedings or the loss of perks, or
from the public; in terms of challenges to authority which entail physical or psychological harm. Skolnick brilliantly integrated police culture with the level of psychological motivation in the "Working personality of the police officer" (Skolnick, 1975). He relates this to two principal variables: "danger and authority which should be interpreted in the light of a constant pressure to appear efficient " (opcit,44).

Following Skolnick, Chatterton argues that the two primary concerns of officers when dealing with a specific incident are the avoidance of "within-the-job" trouble and "on-the-job" trouble (Chatterton, 1978, 1981). Within-the-job trouble, "....is bound up with the relationship between the patrol officer and their supervisors in the organisation" (Chatterton, 1978: 49), such that the lower ranks are:

...concerned that any information about them received by higher level officers projected a favourable impression and at least did not damage their reputations. (Chatterton, 1983: 201).

On-the-job trouble, on the other hand, arises from the environment that the patrol officer polices and the relationship between themselves and the various publics on a division that they encounter. As Chatterton notes:

The decisions and actions taken at incidents reflect the concern to control relationships between themselves and the various publics on a division, to maintain their capacity to intervene authoritatively in any incident and to preserve their own and others beliefs that they were 'on top of the area' (Chatterton, 1981:208).

The avoidance of "trouble", from whichever source, either "within the job" or "on the job" stems from the primary occupational concerns of patrol officers in limiting the type and range of negative sanctions.
The concern with trouble is given added salience by the manner in which the environment is transformed by organisational mediations. The external environment is not a thing in itself which can be discussed in terms of a simple causal relationship between organisation and environment. As Weick argues:

Instead of discussing the 'external environment' we will discuss the 'enacted environment'. The phrase the enacted environment preserves the crucial distinction that we wish to make, the most important being that the human creates the environment to which the system then adapts. The human does not react to any environment, he enacts to it. It is this enacted environment, and nothing else, that is worked upon by the process of organising. (Weick, 1969: 63f)

For Manning, following Weick, the police organisation can be seen essentially as an information processing system, whereby messages, (signals) are converted into signs. However, there is a problematic relationship between signs, the signifier and the signified contained within them. Manning sees the way in which the police receive, encode and act upon information received from the environment, (i.e. a citizens call) as exceedingly complex, (Manning:1983). By the time a call reaches a patrol officer it has undergone three levels of encoding and decoding (Manning, 1983: 197). The result of this semiotic process is that the uncertainty, which necessarily accompanies policing, is replicated and amplified within the communications system because:

Some calls cannot be understood due to the lack of facts, some cannot be understood because the relevant
information is prohibited from the air, and some cannot be understood because they are either previously understood by arrangement or because the understandings lying behind them operate to convey a quite different meaning (Manning, 1977: 303).

The dispatched patrol officer is aware that the message being responded to has a low dependability as a basis for action. A 'fight' may be youthful pranks, a 'domestic' usually involves only tongues, but sometimes knives. On arrival at the incident, a message has to be situationally re-interpreted with reference to location, the actors involved and other available sense data.

One of the consequences of such informational uncertainty is the perceptual heightening of the threat of danger and violence related to on-the-job trouble. It gives rise to what Manning (1977), has termed the 'threat-danger-hero' notion of police work, and the development of a set of working rules which classify various groups and classes as more dangerous than others. In Skolnick's terms, police officers develop a short hand classification of people who represent "Symbolic Assailants". Thus he writes:

The policeman, because his work requires him to be occupied continually with potential violence develops a perceptual shorthand to identify certain types of people as symbolic assailants, that is persons who use gesture, language and attire that the policeman has come to recognise as a prelude to violence (Skolnick, 1975).

As Holdaway has shown, (Holdaway, 1983: Ch6) in Britain the category of "Symbolic Assailant" is extended to include not just those who threaten the police with potential violence, but also those who, because of their authority or status, can challenge or disarm police authority. Lawyers, doctors and social workers fall into the category of "challengers", while women and children are "disarmers".
The uncertainty surrounding police work is not only reflected in the occupational culture, it is transformed by it. Action and excitement, comparatively rare events in police work, are moulded into stories which punctuate the long tea breaks taken during the quiet periods. Long past incidents relating to glamorous and heroic deeds are recalled. Quite trivial incidents are transformed, through skilfull recounting, into dramatic and exciting events, where danger was met with skill and measured judgement resulting in a satisfactory outcome (Holdaway, 1983: Ch10). Such transformations are not just related to the telling of stories but have consequences in action, as the technology of unit beat policing is manipulated to produce the excitement that is often lacking. Thus, the communications system and motorised patrol are used to create excitement through co-ordinated chases, if not of perceived offenders, then of each other (ibid).

The consequences and correlates of uncertainty, above all, relate to the problem of on-the-job trouble that the patrol officer faces. It is arguable, however, that the most important aspect of uncertainty facing the patrol officer stems from the internal organisation of policing rather than the external environment. Within-the-job trouble primarily results from the fact that the police officer "can never be absolutely certain that the action taken in a particular situation will later prove to be the most effective way of handling the situation" (Chatterton, 1978: 49). As the PSI Report makes plain, within the organisation rules operate in an almost entirely negative fashion; they are inhibitory rules. However, due to the nature of supervision, the enforcement of such rules is almost entirely retrospective. It is related to paper work, or the account of action, rather than the action itself. Inhibitory rules are not, "...internalised but are taken into account when deciding how to act in case they should be caught and the rule invoked against them" (PSI, 1983: Vol iv, 171).

As various organisational studies have shown, police deviancy is both engendered and condoned by the police organisation itself. The requirement for the patrol officer to
be highly productive while, at the same time, keeping within legal and organisational constraints is contradictory. The tension can be summed up as falling between a 'due process' model of law enforcement and a 'crime control' model. On the one hand, through various presentational strategies, the police organisation presents itself as being constrained by 'due process' while at the same time, fighting a losing battle against crime and, therefore requiring tougher laws to fight the war. Because present laws are inadequate, it is argued, the patrol officer is often forced to bend the rules. The Chief Constable of Essex, Bob Bunyard explained in relation to hooliganism; "too often officers dealing with such incidents have to pretend that they have powers which they do not have". (The Guardian, 20/6/85: 1), explicitly making the fact that the police often have to exceed their legal public powers in the interest of crime control.

Proverbially, the lower rank's assertion that one cannot police by the book results in the fact that, 'you're always in the shit'. While the organisation is prepared to condone rule breaking as long as everything goes smoothly, if a complaint is received or something should go wrong then a multitude of inhibitory rules can be used to bring someone to account. In the minds of the lower ranks this is to ritualistically offer a sacrificial lamb to the gods.

This uncertainty is increased rather than decreased by the contradiction between the rhetoric and the reality of law and police operational guidelines laid down in the Judge's Rules. In practice, the law often favours crime control rather than due process (McBarnet, 1978 & 1981). Thus, while many police researchers have described the rule breaking and illegality of the rank and file practices, McBarnet carefully illustrates how such practices are enshrined in ad hoc case law (McBarnet, 1981: Ch 3). The consequence is that:

Front men like the police become the 'fall guys' of the criminal justice system taking the blame for any
injustices in the operation of law, both in theory and...indeed in law. The law holds individual policemen personally responsible for the contravention of legality that are successfully sued, while at the same time refusing to make clear until after the event exactly what the police are supposed to do (McBarnet, 1981: 156).

The uncertainty faced by the lower ranks results in the need to control as much information as possible. Their autonomy from direct supervision creates the climate where information management is made possible. Organisational sanction results primarily from indirect information, in the form of paperwork, gossip, or a public complaint. By selectively filtering and laundering information the patrol officer is able to lessen the risk of in-the-job trouble.

The control of information has various ramifications. If the police organisation both condemns and condones primary deviations, the result is to engender secondary deviations in the form of peer group solidarity which makes secrecy and the control of information possible. Thus, the solidarity which results from the external aspects of the job, (Cf Westley, 1970: Ch3) e.g., the threat of physical harm, is strengthened by internal contradictions. Peer group solidarity is directed as much against the organisation as the environment. In Westley's, admittedly small, sample of officers seventy-three percent would not "shop" another officer for stealing and would perjure themselves to protect the offender.

To Westley, secrecy is one of the most important aspects of the occupational culture represented by the rule of silence. Alderson (1984) has illustrated how this rule of silence made the effectiveness of Operation Countryman, the corruption case in the Metropolitan Police, impossible. The team of detectives brought in to investigate from the provinces was met by a wall of silence. Involving over one hundred officers, and costing several millions of pounds, the operation resulted in the
prosecution of only two detectives for accepting bribes. This was in spite of the Chief Constable in charge of the investigation being convinced that, of the eighty or so prime suspects, at least twenty five would be charged.

Manning suggests that lying in police organisations takes several different forms, (Manning, 1977: 185-188): lying to protect one's colleagues, lying to protect an informant, lying to evade internal discipline and lying to procure a charge. Information is therefore manipulated either by omission, thus remaining silent, or by commission, and being liable to perjury.

If in-the-job trouble results from the need to control information by officers as a result of perceived threats to their autonomy from the organisation, then on-the-job trouble results from threats to their autonomy on the streets.

The Environment: Policing People

On-the-job trouble arises from the patrol officer's mandate to act authoritatively in a given situation. Thus, as Fielding notes, one of the key accomplishments of a successful intervention is the "ability to convey the potential power of the office while containing its actual deployment to a minimum" (Fielding, 1984: 14). There are two elements in considering on-the-job trouble. The first is, what strategies can be used to prevent trouble arising, and the second is, if trouble does arise, what strategies can be applied to minimise it? In spite of the fact that most police interventions go unchallenged, the majority of studies of policing have focused on the second of these two issues (Reiss, 1968; Skolnick, 1975; Bittner, 1967; Westley, 1970; van Mannen, 1974 & 1978b; Holdaway, 1983; PSI, 1983: Vol iv).

Collectively, these studies have documented how the law-in-books, which gives rise to the legal right to use "as much force
as necessary" to secure the arrest or detention of a suspect, is translated by the occupational culture into law-in-action. In Westley's sample of officers, sixty-six percent gave their primary rationalisation for the use of force an illegal basis, i.e. disrespect for the police or for obtaining information. Only eight percent gave a legal basis, i.e. to make an arrest (Westley, 1970: 122). Thus Westley concludes that, "group engendered values are relatively more important to the men than their legal function." (ibid)

Reiss' observational data confirms this picture. Of the thirty-seven incidents where unnecessary force was used:

Almost one half of the cases involved the open defiance of police authority (39%), or resisting arrest (9%). Open defiance of police authority, however, is what the policeman defines as his authority, not necessarily official authority. Indeed in 40% of the cases that policemen considered open defiance the policeman never made an arrest (Reiss, 1968, reprinted in Lundmann 1980: 292).

Holdaway's study of the British police also illustrates that the rules governing the use of force are occupational rather than legal. Force is used to regain control and authority, to gain confession, and for retribution (Holdaway, 1983: Ch 9). However, as Black's study illustrated, the use of unnecessary force may be limited, with other resources being brought to bear. Thus, disrespect for the police results in the chance of being arrested increasing by between twenty to thirty percent. (Black:1980;97). The use of force is, however, incremental rather than clear cut. An officer may choose to ignore a disrespectful slight to his or her authority, he or she may choose to manipulate the grounds for arrest, or choose to physically coerce the offender, either for the purposes of an arrest, or as an educative measure which has no legal consequences.

The use of force and arrest for dealing with such incidents
is not without its problems, and for these reasons officers may be circumspect about resorting to its use too often. First, there is always the possibility that its use may be unsuccessful: the officer may sustain injury, the offender may escape, etc. Second, while it may be immediately successful, the suspect may sustain injuries which require treatment, resulting in the possibility of an internal investigation and/or the suspect may make a formal complaint of wrongful arrest which will inevitably result in some form of internal disciplinary enquiry. Third, the over reliance on the use of force and arrest may be regarded by colleagues and superiors alike as a failure to negotiate a non-coercive or legitimate non-legal solution, thus raising issues about the officer's competence.

The exercise of authority is always problematic for the police and, in part, this stems from the peculiar nature of their working environment. Briefly, police/public encounters may be characterised as being anonymous: they usually have no previous knowledge of each other; coercive: generally the public are unwilling actors in the police drama; stressful: the encounters are often charged with emotion; brief: the encounters only last a few minutes; and, finally, spontaneous: the parties have little or no knowledge of what to expect from each other (Sykes & Clarke, 1975: 477-488).

For the patrol officer, the problem of supervision of this "volatile working group" (Sykes & Brent, 1983: Ch3), is related to the essential task of gaining information to ascertain whether or not an arrestable offence has occurred; the restitution and maintenance of order within the situation; gaining the right to act authoritatively and determining the resolution of the situation. (Sykes & Brent, 1983: 68; Sykes & Clarke, 1975: 476-485; Manning, 1982).

There are various mechanisms for minimising the chance of challenges to the officer's right to intervene authoritatively, and thus limit the possibility of on-the-job trouble and the loss of control. For instance, standing away and slightly behind the drivers-side door when carrying out a car stop so that the door
cannot be used as a weapon against one (Rubinstein: 1973; Ch7). Such physical strategies, however, range from the instrumental to the symbolic. For instance, standing very close to a suspect so as to be in a position to thwart their attempts to escape or by using gesture to convey information by one's relaxed gait, etc. (ibid).

In conjunction with the use of the body, the most important aspect of a police officer's armoury is the ability to use talk as a strategy to gain compliance. Empirically, it is not the case that when an officer's authority is challenged the result is the use of force, rather it is the use of talk. As Sykes & Brent show, "...in over 90% of cases of disobedience to an order that occurred in these encounters, repetition in a civil manner was sufficient to achieve compliance" (Sykes & Brent, 1983: 63). It would appear from this that officers routinely accept challenges to their authority without recourse to force, partially, perhaps, because they realise that citizens have to switch to a different "cognitive domain" before they comply with a request, and initially all that is necessary is to try again. If the strategy is still unsuccessful then the result is to enter into what Muir terms, 'an extortionate transaction of threat and counterthreat' (Muir, 1977: 38). Thus, Sykes & Brent illustrate that the sequence of such extortionate transactions tends to suggest:

That as the number or length of the disturbances increases, the officer gradually escalates the forcefulness of his regulatory responses to a point where the civilian gives in. (Sykes & Brent, 1983: 22).

Further, as Fielding illustrates, talk based strategies utilise generally available repertoires to achieve particular ends. Thus, humour and civility, deceit and a sense of timing all become resources by which control can be maintained. It is not so much that an officer's work is about ordering and commanding citizens, but setting up the conditions under which such imperatives are viewed as either legitimate or at least tacitly
accepted (Fielding, 1984). For successful and, therefore, competent practice officers have to display competency in three domains, effective, cognitive and tactical (Manning, 1979a). However, such competency is not merely related to the situational exigencies of the moment. As we have already seen, the patrol officer is enmeshed in a complex web of relationships which derive from legal, occupational, organisational and environmental arena. From this perspective, police work cannot be understood merely from an examination of what happens on the street. For instance, an arrest for drunk and disorderly may be legally correct but the station sergeant may view it as inappropriate. Conversely, it may be occupationally and organisationally acceptable to arrest for 'assault on police' but later judged illegal by the courts. Caught between the competing and sometimes contradictory pressures which stem from organisational, environmental and legal uncertainty the patrol officer's position is tenuous.

Although patrol officers have to reach an individual accommodation to the precarious position that they find themselves in, they are not completely isolated since the same situation is also faced by their colleagues. Their common problems allow shared solutions. These solutions have both a cognitive and practical domain. In cognitive terms they allow officers to draw on a second order system of rules which orders and makes sense of the competing and contradictory demands. Practically, the extent to which an officer draws upon the second order rule system of the occupational culture will, to a greater or lesser degree, determine the contours of what police work is and how it can be achieved.

To understand and explain police behaviour it is therefore necessary to examine how the police task is constructed by the organisational actors. This approach implies a partial rejection of much, particularly American, sociology of police work. Like Sociology in general, a significant part of police sociology has taken as its raison d'être the discovery of law like generalisations which could be used to explain the effects of individual police officers' decisions (Sherman 1980). However,
such analyses do little to advance our understanding of how the police patrol task is achieved by knowledgeable and self reflecting actors. The saliences of patrol officers are not given by a neutral reading of the classic sociological variables of age, sex and class, or indeed by the more relevant variables such as suspects' demeanour or legal seriousness. Instead, they are filtered through an occupational lens which refocuses their perspectives.

Much of the sociology of the police has ignored this crucial point and the result has been the failure to account for patrol officer behaviour. For instance, Friedrich's sophisticated analysis — based on the extensive Black Reiss data — could only account for 25% of the variance using the twelve best variables at the situational level of analysis (Friedrich: 1977).

It is the purpose of Part II to indicate how the patrol task is constructed through the mediation of the occupational culture. It will be argued that the most important factor in shaping a patrol officer's work is the avoidance of trouble, from both the public that he or she polices and the organisation for which he or she works.
PART II

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE POLICE PATROL TASK
As we have seen, the occupational relevancies of the patrol officer cannot be derived from the organisational rhetoric of crime fighting which has limited applicability to the reality of routine patrol. Nor can they be derived from a reading of the formal organisational rules. These are more a reflection of the institutionalised attempts of management to control their subordinates rather than the reality of actual practice. Instead, it is necessary to examine the manner in which the patrol officer makes sense of the world and constructs the practice of policing and document, "the variety of practices and mundane considerations involved in the determination of operational meaning and situational relevance of policies and procedure for ongoing organisational activities" (Zimmerman, 1970: 222).

By treating the organisational arena as a dynamic forum in which meaning is created and recreated by reflexive and knowledgeable actors the analyst is faced with two problems. First, how does he or she gain access to such meanings? Second, by what criteria can he or she claim that they are shared? This
is particularly a problem as such knowledge is not readily accessible. It rests on tacit understandings, unspoken assumptions, and taken for granted commonsense agreements between organisational actors. They are not manifest but operatively latent. It is in an attempt to solve these two problems that an analysis of occupational language provides a crucial key.

The relationship between language and culture has long been of interest to anthropologists who have seen the function of communication for both individuals and groups as directly related to participants' purposes and needs (Hymes, 1961). Language provides a means by which different speech communities categorise and differentiate the social world which enables them to contrast activities in terms of their different purposes, roles and focuses. (Frake, 1969).

Traditionally, such an approach has been limited to speech communities who inhabit a "physically bounded unit of space and have a full range of role opportunities" (Saville-Troike, 1982: p19) such as a tribe or a nation state. More recently, the concept of speech community has been used to include "any group within society which has anything significant in common". It is in this second sense that that subcultural and organisational theorists have used the concept. The development of specialist languages has been documented in the construction industry (Reimer:1979), among heroin users (Agar:1973), and within the medical profession (Becker et al.:1961) to single out but a few. The importance of these vocabularies, Manning argues, is that they contain:

...the information necessary for dealing with the problems of the organisation. As these are faced, role terms, role imputations and typifications arise and have with them sets of acceptable referents". (Manning, 1970: 225).

The ability of any member of a group to utilise its language correctly can be seen as a mark of social competence. This
applies as much to understanding the vocabulary and grammar as in knowing what to say to whom and how appropriately to say it in a situation (Hymes, 1966). Within an organisational setting the discovery of a distinct occupational argot provides a mechanism for determining the manner in which its users categorise the world and which aspects of it are of particular importance.

In the police organisation, like any other, the vocabulary provides the distinct and discrete elements which locate people and activities that are occupationally and organisationally relevant. In Mills' sense, this is a vocabulary of motives, since correct usage in accounting for actions provides others with the motive for that action. For example, when a police officer says, "I stopped a couple of niggers in the High Street.", the word "niggers" provides enough organisational justification for the stop. As Mills reminds us, a sociological account of motives does not, "require either an explanation or reason for the action but, rather, some description of the socially organised conditions which produce the practical and ordinary use of motive in the mundane affairs of societal members." (Mills, 197:103). The grammar provides the "deep structure" which allows for "ordinary members' competent and sensible employ(ment) of a motive as a device." By uncovering the grammar which links the vocabulary in such a way as to make it organisationally relevant, we are able to discover the key saliences of the organisational actors.

The Terms of Trouble

Within the police culture there is a highly developed occupational argot, part of which is reproduced below. It is apparent from an examination of the terms, that their referents are the practical day-to-day concerns of officers rather than
strictly legal or organisational concerns.

At first sight, the terms appear to be little more than a colourful, yet rather vague and arbitrary slang:

"bottle" "pear-shaped" "headcase" "nigger" "threw a wobblie" "umbrellas" "trendy lefty" "out of order" "coon" "tart" "comeback at you" "banana-shaped" "spade" "nutter" "toe-rag" "Tom" "over the top" "paki" "bent" "wet apeshit" "coloured gentlemen" "sootie" "bollocking" "yob" "commie" "black" "taking the micky" "stuck on" "Anti" "lost his bottle" "storytime" "coloured" "trot" "slag" "Greenham woman" "summary justice" "street justice" "loonies" "our coloured bretheren" "jackanory" "Jungle Bunny" "spook" "wog" "pro" "grievy"

Most of the terms are not unique to the police, they are borrowed from the wider culture. However, their meaning and import is subtly reworked and transformed to provide a wide and rich vocabulary. While each term is interesting in its own right, taken as a whole, correct use in the organisational setting is reliant on an underlying grammar which structures and orders the use of the vocabulary. For instance, what do "over the top" "story-time" and "bent" have in common? Or, for that matter, "spades" "trendy lefties" and "toe-rags"?

If one takes seriously Chatterton's claim that the primary concern of patrol officers when dealing with an incident is the avoidance of "within-the-job" and "on-the-job" trouble, then it becomes readily apparent as to what the terms are referring. They are all actions on the part of the police or the public that are related to the problem of trouble. Furthermore, the terms can be broken down into four distinct categories: those that refer to people who are considered troublesome; behaviour that is indicative of trouble; the strategies that officers use to avoid "on" and "in-the-job" trouble; and the organisational consequences of not avoiding trouble.
### Figure 1.

**The Terms of Trouble**

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<th>PEOPLE</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Class, Sex &amp; Others</th>
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<td>Coons</td>
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<td>Spooks</td>
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It is now necessary to examine each of the terms separately, to unpack their meaning and show how they frame officers' perceptions of the people and incidents with which they deal.
People: Racial Categories

In Kimberley, there are more words in the police argot to describe someone of West Indian origin than there are for any other category of person: "slag", "nigger", "coon", "spook", "spade", "jungle bunny", "wog", "coloured gentlemen", "our coloured bretheren", "black", "coloured". Such terms are not a police invention, they are borrowed from the wider society and transformed by the police culture to fulfil a particular role in the construction of the officer's everyday work world. Apart from "black" and "coloured", all the labels convey more than a simple denotative label referring to ethnic origin. Embedded within them is the history of colonialism, domination, oppression and racism, writ small. Even the terms "coloured gentlemen" and "our coloured bretheren", as used in Kimberley, convey ironic intent, for blacks are viewed as neither "gentlemen" nor as "bretheren". Such labels are used as presentational strategies. For instance:

Towards the end of the briefing, after a discussion on deployment, one of the younger P.C.'s interrupted: "What are we going to do about the spades in the square?" The inspector, quickly glancing at me, interceded, "Coloured gentlemen please A...." There was a giggle from the rest of the relief.

The term "black", used positively and self assertively by the West Indian community itself, is notable by its absence and, although occasionally used, more often by senior officers than their juniors, its usage is the exception rather than the rule.

Racist talk extends from the use of pejorative labels to wider attitudes as the following brief extracts from my field notes illustrate:

While patrolling, a young P.C. pointed out some of the
new building work going on. "I think it's some new housing, they look nice, but soon they'll (blacks) move in and turn them into slums."

The reality of poverty in the decaying inner city is also questioned. As an inspector put it:

Some of the squalor that people live in round here is bad because of bad education, lack of understanding, but there are only a few real poor.

Or as a P.C. put it more succinctly:

You know this is the poorest borough in London but look, there are more BMWs here than in the City, and where do they get the money from?

Even where the day to day evidence contradicts beliefs, stereotypes prevail:

Black unemployed youth take it out on society by robbing mainly white women.

Not all officers express such strong beliefs, although many do. However, racist talk is part of the everyday work world of police officers. It is accepted and tolerated, even by supervisory staff and, therefore, tacitly encouraged. The culture of the relief is at home with the language of racism:

It is customary to head back to the station at midnight for a cup of tea. Five or six of the relief (all male) were lounging around in the canteen waiting for the kettle to boil. A was engaging everyone in a fast banter of insult exchanges. Somehow the conversation got steered towards B's sister. As B put it: "She's going to marry a fucking spade." There was some discussion as to
who he was, and A said that he knew the man. "He's a fucking mountain, can't half lift some, bet he's got a big dick." "I'm speechless", said B. "I mean, what do I do with their kids -- probably grow up to be Rastas." He then started to immitate his prospective nieces and newphews talking in a broad West Indian accent. "It's not that I don't like him", he went on "but he is a spade."

Another P.C. joined in: "It's not right though, is it? Horses don't go with cows." All seven or eight of those present were quite at home with this banter, with the exception of D who, although generally quiet, kept completely out of the conversation and every now and then would look at me uncomfortably and raise his eye brows.

Police Racism: A Discussion

The police culture is at ease with the language of racism. There is, however, no necessary fit between attitudes and behaviour, and establishing such a link is a tenuous business. As can be seen from the preceding section, the verbalised hostility to West Indians is widespread. It ranges from the use of pejoritative labels, which are demonstrably false, to wider attitudes. As Taylor reminds us, "verbalisms are real because they are socially efficacious, they are not therefore less real because they happen to be untrue" (Taylor, 1979: 148). It is, therefore, to miss the point to see such verbalisations as a manifestation of false consciousness or mistaken beliefs: the purposes that they serve in a particular setting are independent of their truth value.

It is important to keep analytically separate the different forms of racism. While prejudice and bias, as attitudinal values, may be rife they may or may not be transformed, through action, into discrimination and differential enforcement. Further, if differentiation is based upon real difference in
crime rates for particular groups, then it is not discriminatory. This latter position is the one frequently resorted to by senior police officers to defend intensive policing operations. For instance, in defence of their Swamp 81 operation which preceded the Brixton riots, Commanders Fairburn and Adams went to great lengths to explain that the police were responding to a massive increase of street crime in the Brixton area. (Scarman Report, 1982). As Lord Scarman summed up in his enquiry:

"It may be that to describe the street crime situation as unique was to indulge in hyperbole. But the submissions do not explain away the practical import nor the seriousness of the crime problem in "L" District as it presented itself to Commander Adams, and subsequently to Commander Fairburn" (Lord Scarman, 1982: 85).

Interestingly, such a position is supported by Jock Young, previously one of the leading lights of the New Criminology (Taylor, Walton and Young, 1973). In an almost complete volte-face (Lea and Young, 1982; Lea and Young, 1984), Young maintains that there has been a "real rise in crime among the West Indian population", and that the police, in responding to it, were not "simply responding to figments of their imagination" (Lea and Young, 1982: 166).

On the other hand, Blom-Cooper and Drabble argue, in criticism to the evidence presented to Lord Scarman, that the police were involved, partially at least, in a self fulfilling prophecy. The prejudice of the lower ranks, manifest in the higher arrest rate for West Indians, results in the organisational policy being switched to more aggressive patrolling, which comes to be presented as neutrally responding to higher crime rates (Blom Cooper and Drabble, 1982).

A far more strident attack comes from Bridges and Gilroy who maintain that the link between crime rates and ethnic origin is purely a function of police prejudice. (Bridges and Gilroy, 1982). Furthermore, they argue that to engage in any discussion of race and crime is to give "intellectual support to racist
stereotypes of the black community as socially and economically disorganised" (Bridges & Gilroy, 1982: 35). For Gilroy, black crime is an essentially political act and, in this position, he goes further than Hall et al who, in "Policing the Crisis" tentatively suggest that mugging is a proto-political act (Hall et al 1981: 397). Instead, they argue:

We will not be drawn to debate the extent and character of ethnic crime. Instead we have chosen to examine policing practice and the laws and criminalisation processes which attend it (1982: 152).

By refusing to engage in such debates, Gilroy is guilty of romanticism. On the one hand, most crime is intra rather than inter-related: whites steal from whites, blacks from blacks, (cf: Stevens and Willis, 1979), on the other, the police role is equated with law enforcement which is only a marginal aspect of their work. Gilroy wants to see black crime as a revolutionary act:

Under certain conditions the struggle to define crime and criminals not only acquires a political character, but becomes central to the process of class formation (Gilroy, 1982: 150).

While the process of definition is indeed a political act, it is hard to see how mugging qua mugging is a political expression on the same level as that of the Tolpuddle Martyrs. (Gilroy, 1983).

The race crime debate is important because it illustrates how views tend to become polarised without regard to the available evidence. On the one hand, writers such as Gilroy, 1982/1983; Bridges, 1983; Bridges and Gilroy, 1982; Gutzmore, 1983; Colman and Gorman, 1982 take the evidence of prejudiced police attitudes to be sufficient in attributing discrimination in practice, uncritically accepting a simplistic and questionable
perspective from labelling and deviancy amplification (Cf Mawby, 1979). On the other hand, Waddington, 1983/1984 rejects the idea that the police are individually racially prejudiced. Rather, he sees their hostility to West Indians, in particular, as resulting from the abrasive nature of the encounters that the police have with West Indian male youth. While this is a powerful prop which underpins the lower ranks' hostility, Waddington fails to analyse the other dimensions of discrimination which, while not operating on an individual level, serve to increase the criminalisation of particular subsections of the population.

Reiner, in his thorough review of the literature on the operation of police discrimination and differential enforcement, illustrates the complexity and multilayered elements involved (Reiner, 1985). Taking the evidence from various observation studies, (including James, 1979; Holdaway 1983 and the PSI, 1983 Vol iv), he argues that categorical discrimination (i.e. action against members of a particular group only on the basis that they are members of the group and not on any other legally relevant criteria (Reiner, 1985: 125)) is a marginal and indiscriminant form of police prejudice. If discrimination does occur it is more likely to be operative because of other forms of discriminatory practice which are outside of the purview of the individual police officer, or not related to his or her attitudinal values. These additional features of discrimination Reiner terms, Interactional, Institutional, Statistical and Transmitted discrimination (Reiner, 1985: Ch4).

Transmitted discrimination operates because the police are heavily dependent on calls from the public (Cf Eckblom and Heal), and thus differential enforcement rates may result. If the public are more likely to call the police to incidents involving members of ethnic groups, then it is discrimination by sections of the public, rather than the police, that is operative. Further, in their role as dispute settlers, the police are heavily dependent on the preference of the complainant as to what action to take (Bittner & Bayley, 1983; Black, 1980), and a
higher arrest rate for ethnic groups may be the result of public prejudice.

Interactional discrimination results from the officer using discretion, not on the basis of legally relevant criteria but on the level of respect accorded by the suspect to the officer. The greater the disrespect shown the more likely that an arrest will follow (Black, 1980; Sykes & Brent, 1983; Smith & Visher, 1981). As Reiner notes, while 'contempt of cop' is not a valid reason for arrest it may provide a possible basis for a valid booking of a suspect who would otherwise have been let off (Reiner, 1985: 134).

Institutional discrimination arises from the differential application of resources to particular problems. (Cf. Carr-Hill & Stern, 1979.) Thus, particular sections of the community are disproportionately stopped, searched and arrested (Blom-Cooper & Drabble, 1983; Willis, 1983; Stevens & Willis, 1979). In Kimberley, for example, one relief inspector consistently deployed his officers to a particular square which was a popular meeting place for young West Indians, even if this meant letting other beats go unpatrolled.

Statistical Discrimination is a predominant factor in proactive policing and is especially apparent in stop and search operations. If the known lifestyle of a group involves a legally proscribed activity, e.g., hippies or Rastafarians using marijuana, those identified as a member of that group become a potential target for police action. Officially such procedures are prohibited. However, the evidence suggests that the practice is widespread (Willis, 1983; Stevens & Willis, 1979; PSI, 1983: Vol iv). Even so, it should be remembered, as Reiner points out, that the basis for such action is not prejudice per se but a concern with maintaining the appearance of efficiency.

The available evidence suggests that police discriminatory practice is widespread, but that it is only marginally related to prejudiced attitudes. The question still remains that, given the documented hostility towards West Indians, what purpose does it serve and why does it manifest itself so forcefully? Part of the
answer might be that the police are drawn from that section of society that is most likely to be overtly prejudiced (cf Bagley & Varma, 1979; Reiner, 1978). The problem with such an explanation is that it fails to explain why the butt of police racism is almost solely West Indian. Indeed, in Kimberley, where a substantial minority of the population are Asian and a smaller but visible minority are Jews, there is little overt hostility to either group. And this lack of hostility is reflected in the smaller number of pejorative labels applied to these groups.

I would suggest that the following explanation might be more in keeping with the available evidence and my own experience. As Albert Cohen noted (1965), subcultures do not so much invent new forms of social life as tend to borrow elements from the wider society and rework them to provide solutions to their own problems. The prejudice of police officers is, then, borrowed from the range of attitudes available in the wider society, and used for their own purpose. The important point is that race, as a category, is less relevant to police officers than other more occupationally salient categories. The most important of these, I would argue, is "trouble". While West Indians, to the police, represent a particularly troublesome group, there are other groups who also fall into the same category. These are not racial groups, in fact the only thing that unites them is the police perception of them as either "symbolic assailants", to use Skolnicks term, or "Challengers", to use Holdaway's.

Police negative stereotyping is, therefore, less dependent on race than upon the occupationally relevant criterion of "trouble". Consider the following example which is not untypical of many daily encounters with West Indian males:

Paul decided to stop everything that came down the road that we were on "to see what was moving about at this time of night". As the first car approached, Paul stepped out into the road and flagged it down with his
arms. The driver was a West Indian man in his mid thirties and the passenger was a white male of the same age.

Paul approached the driver's window, "Would you mind stepping outside onto the road please." As the man stepped out onto the road he started to banter: "Ey why you always picking on me. I just driving my friend home and you always picking on me. That's four times you stopped me this week. You shouldn't be allowed to go round harrassing people. What's your number? I'm going to make a complaint against you.", he taunted aggressively. Paul stood impassively on the curb, not reacting to the torrent. "657, that's my number", he eventually interjected. "Anyway I've never seen you before."

"Four times you stopped me and I'm going to make a complaint." "Please do...have you got my number?", replied Paul with mock politeness. (Missing Data: the man is moving around and I cannot hear what is being said).

"You know where the station is ?" asked Paul.
"Yes I know."

"Now, what's your name?", demanded Paul in an authoritative voice in an effort to re-establish the purpose of the stop. The man gave it and Paul asked him if he had his documents with him.
"No. But I'm going down to the station to make a complaint".

"Well then", retorted Paul with mock politeness "you can take your documents in at the same time. I'm giving you this form and your...." The man interrupted, "Yeah I know. I got five days" and with that he got back into his car and drove off.

Such incidents are troublesome to officers because they challenge their right to authoritatively intervene and present them with
the problem of control. However, as I have indicated, the concern with trouble is not just applicable to racial categories but underscores the entire patrol officer's enterprise.

People: Political Categories

The political categories of "Trot", "Commie", "Leftie", "Trendie Leftie", "anti", "Greenham Women", have to be understood with reference to the growing campaign for police accountability within the country at large, and specifically within the MET, since the publication of Lord Scarman's Report (Cf. Policing London, Smiley, 1982; Spencer, 1985; Jefferson & Grinshaw, 1984; Waddington, 1984). In the aftermath of the inner city rioting of 1981, the battle for police accountability has become a major issue, and nowhere has it been more keenly fought out than in the crumbling inner city areas such as Lambeth, Brent, Hackney, and Toxteth. (Cf. John Cunningham in the Guardian 2/8/85: 13). The result has been an increased polarisation between elected representatives and the local police Commanders (Cf. Cunningham in the Guardian 29/7/85 p 5; Okojie, 1985). In Kimberley the effect is felt not just at senior management levels as the following extract illustrates:

The inspector saw the left wing council as putting "serious obstacles" in the way of establishing good community relations. "They see everything as political. This has been the problem of setting up Local Tenants Groups and Neighbourhood Watch Schemes. They want political control of the police. The council thwarts us by telling their officers that they may not talk to us."
The effect of this policy is also keenly felt on the ground as well. As one P.C. explained:

"I went down to this new place that they've got for young adolescent offenders about a burglary. When I'd finished I asked the manager if it would be possible to pop in one night to get to know the kids."

'Not until you've sorted out who killed Colin Roach', he replied.

'OK', I said 'but I'll leave you with my name. If you want to contact me at the station anytime.' 'I don't need your name. If I want it I'll contact the station.'"

This is not an isolated incident, many of the officers, and specifically Home Beats, talked about the problem of non-cooperation. Officially, at least, they were excluded from schools, youth clubs, nurseries, residential care homes, etc. As another officer related:

"It was a bit bad of me. I should have gone down there before, but you know, I just didn't seem to get round to it. Anyway last week I finally got to this youth club. This woman who ran it said I could pop in at any time. Anyway I finally got down there and put my head around the door and she came out. I got the feeling that she didn't want me to come in. She was sort of blocking my way with her body. Well I didn't say anything about it at the time, but when I saw her later I asked if she was trying to stop me getting in. She said that some of the kids didn't like police officers about. Well what a load of rubbish is that? I went to see the vicar who was on the committee, to ask him if he knew what was going on. He said he'd look into it, but it seems as if some of the other workers, who are a bit left you know, have gone in and stirred up anti police feeling."
Such anti-police feeling is not seen as indicative of true local opinion. It is viewed as alien to the "respectable" people in the area and unrepresentative of the "silent majority". Hostility towards the police is the product of deviants whose motives are suspect. As one sergeant expressed it:

"The council and the Police Monitoring Group are not comprised of 'real politicians' but 'bandwagonners'... I dont mind if someone's a commie, if that's what they really believe in, but," he lamented "most of the people in this area are not really sincere."

Or as one P.C. put it rather less subtly:

"The lefties on the council just squander money on such things as 'Babies Against The Bomb' which is full of fucking lessies anyway!".

Although such challenges are potentially less threatening than those that arise from direct police intervention on the streets, to the patrol officer they represent a more difficult form to handle. In fast moving incidents on the streets, challenges can be met with a variety of responses, turning a blind eye, arrest or even extra-legal violence. In some instances, at least, such challenges, although not seen as legitimate are seen as understandable - the fleeing felon has a lot to lose from being arrested. On the other hand, political challenges come from people who, in the patrol officers' eyes, have no personal gripe with the police. Rather, their aim is to challenge the legitimacy of police action on a broader, perhaps legal or constitutional basis. Given that much policing is of dubious legality (although cf Macbarnet,1981) such challenges not only threaten the individual police officer, they undermine the whole basis of police action.

Interestingly, the political categories were almost entirely absent from Surrey, their salience being generated from the
tensions within the inner city. In this case, then, the negative characterisation of particular groups is more likely to be related to occupationally relevant criteria than pre-existing prejudice. There existed other categories, particularly "Greenham Women" which was applied to any middle class female challenger, and the label was often designated with reference to the woman's attire. This category was highly pertinent since the station was supplying ten officers a week to Greenham Common at the height of the Anti Missile Protests. Significantly, it is one of the few negative labels for females other than "Pro", "Tom", "Tart" which are all related to prostitution. This is hardly surprising given that women rarely come into contact with the police other than as victims, and the patrol officer willingly casts them into that role. The most common category, however, applied to the white working class youths who were mainly resident on one estate. Although the intensity of hostility shown to this group was less than that towards West Indians in the MET the negative characterisation remained. As one W.P.C told me:

"You can be sure that if we have any trouble it will be from the yobs on the Estate."

Or as another expressed it:

"Fucking animals, that's what they are."

Such stereotypes were operationally visible, specifically in relation to car stops. Joy-riding was becoming an increasing problem in the area, with youths from the estate stealing cars, driving them around for an evening and then dumping them on the common behind the estate before 'firing' them. Indeed, one area of the common was littered with the burnt out shells of cars:

As we patrolled the estate a Cortina with four white youths in it was spotted heading in the direction of the
common. We turned and followed. As far as I could gather, any car with four youths in it, especially a Cortina, in this part of Fakeston was a possible TDA.

Similarly, in Kimberley one of the less subtle justifications for a car stop I heard was:

"Four Niggers in a B.M.W., must be worth a pull."

Thus, while race provides the immediate justification, in the context of the Surrey data there are other situationally relevant criteria for the stop. Four young men, possibly joy-riding, in a poor neighbourhood with high youth unemployment may not give the legal or the organisationally necessary justification for a stop but it is occupationally sufficient regardless of race.

In the main, police hostility is directed towards the lower stratum of society. However, in Surrey middle class challengers who argue about being ticketed for parking tickets and similar offences are viewed with equal contempt, "Yes madam, please do write to the Chief Superintendent" and gave rise to a well appreciated joke from the canteen audience:

Q. What's the difference between a hedgehog and a Range Rover?
A. A Range Rover's got all the pricks on the inside.

One final group of people who represent "trouble" is worth mentioning, but it does not possess such readily identifiable characteristics as "spades", "yobs" or even "trendy lefties". These are the "nutters", "loonies", and "headcases". This category of person ranges from the senile old lady who is convinced that her neighbours are tapping her phone, to the aikido wrestler who has gone beserk with an axe.

Behaviours That Are Indicative Of Trouble
On the one hand people such as "loonies", present a problem because the evaluation of the truthfulness of their claim is difficult. They are interactionally difficult to handle and they are seen by the relief as unproductive of police work. But this category not only includes the "timewasters" but also the unpredictably violent. They are potentially the most threatening, since rationality is hard to ascribe and, therefore, correct action hard to predict. It is this group that is most likely to "throw a wobblie" or to go "ape-shit" and it is this behaviour that is potentially the most troublesome for patrol officers.

The terms do not refer to the rough and tumble of the ordinary street tussle or to someone trying to resist arrest by being aggressive or non co-operative. Rather, they refer to uncontrolled violent behaviour such as frenzied kicking, biting, scratching, punching, and flailing which necessitates the use of force in order to quell it. Consider the following example of a woman who is being arrested after losing control in a public library and damaging the reception area.

The woman was dragged to the back of the van, still struggling and screaming. A crowd of about fifteen or twenty people had gathered loosely around the forecourt of the library.

The distance from the ground to the back of the van is some two foot, and it was extremely difficult to get the struggling woman into the back. The four of us (three PCs and myself) held her and forced her into the back of the van. She sprang out again. She was held by the neck, arms and middle, lifted up into the air, struggling all the way, and pushed further into the van. PC 'Y' and PC 'Z' collapsed around her to stop her struggling in the confines of the van. "Don't you bite me!", ordered PC 'Z' as he grabbed her hair to avert the sinking teeth.
"Get some cuffs", suggested 'Z'. "I haven't got any", replied 'Y', still trying to contain the writhing body. "Take them off me then".

'Z' was restraining her legs, 'Y' her arms and I her middle. 'Y' managed to retrieve the hand cuffs from 'Z's belt. The woman started to scream and thrash hysterically as 'Y' struggled to get the hand cuffs on her. Finally they were securely on, and she remained in an ungainly heap on the floor of the van with three pairs of hands restraining her movements".

Such behaviour presents the officer with several inter-related problems with regard to competent practice. It is generally understood by their sergeants and peers that people go "completely apeshit" for no reason. However, it is equally recognised that successful policing requires the handling of such situations so that the officer maintains his control without recourse to excessive force. Rock has illustrated this problem nicely with regard to bailiffs.

Their chief concern is to avoid violence and they place great reliance on their ability to persuade a debtor to come to prison with them. They may reconcile a debtor to his fate, by disarming them with humour. A bailiff of D court, for instance would routinely tell a female debtor that he would wait fifteen minutes before they left the house together. When asked why, he would reply. "I'll give you ten minutes to wash your feet and five minutes to change your unmentionables." In many cases the woman's amusement would make her committal easier. (Rock:1973;215-16)

When a person goes "apeshit" it represents the officer's loss of control and, although to be expected in isolated incidents, if an officer has a reputation for prisoners going 'apeshit' on them, then questions will be raised about their ability to handle
people. Officers are keenly aware that seemingly trivial incidents and comments can provoke a prisoner and make them less amenable to control:

After arresting three shoplifters, and having placed them in the back of the panda, P.C. 'H' called back to the station to report to the sergeant that he had "three coming in". He explained to me later that he never calls them "prisoners cos that really winds them up".

Not only does "going apeshit" represent a threat to an officer's competence, but also to his or her physical well being. As the example showed, when people go beserk they possess enormous reserves of strength. Indeed, during my first week in Kimberley, a station sergeant was charging a prisoner and, when he "threw a wobblie", in the ensuing fracas the sergeant was seriously injured and hospitalised for three weeks.

In spite of the occupational necessity of controlling violent and aggressive people, the police are not routinely taught how to control beserk people. Admittedly, shield training does include a set manoeuvre for taking an armed offender in an enclosed space (a knife or bottle, not a gun) but this is not readily available to the patrol officer on the street or in the charge room. Generally, if someone does go beserk, everybody 'bundles in', the principle being that sheer weight of numbers will literally crush opposition. The problem with such a strategy is that it is unpredictable in its outcome. The prisoner may suffer injuries which could result in the need for hospitalisation and possibly result in the officers being charged with assault.

If "throwing a wobblie" and "going apeshit" represent physical challenges to the officer's authority, then "taking the micky" is the term for symbolic resistance. When an officer has warned someone to desist from an activity, such as playing very loud music in the street, if they increase the volume rather than
Although such incidents raise problems for officers, particularly what Muir terms the "paradox of face" (Muir 1977 ch2), they can be handled so that there are no ramifications beyond the encounter itself. However, other incidents can lead to an officer's competence being called into question if there is any internal organisational come back. For instance:

"I got this bloke for cheque fraud, he'd really been living it up, £800 in four days. Anyway I got him and charged him. He was granted bail for the weekend before going to court on the Monday when he was sent down. But do you know what that bastard did. While he was out on bail he got the cheque book, which was never recovered and did another £400 over the weekend. That's really taking the micky that is. It's only just come to light and I've got to go down to prison and interview him. He ain't half going to get a good kicking when I get him on my own."

As Peter Manning points out, the elements that combine to give officers a satisfactory termination to their work are rarely present in encounters. If they are, the officer:

....will make an arrest and charge, he will obtain thanks and obtain closure and he will manage an agreement between the parties, and he will accomplish the knitting together of "loose ends". Final and actual termination occurs when the "right paper" is submitted which ensures that the termination will not come back at you.

(Manning:1982;127)

In the above example, for a uniformed officer to obtain an arrest, charge and conviction of a cheque fraud represents a "good pinch" and should enable the officer to enjoy a satisfactory outcome. By using the cheque book to continue the
offence while on bail, the offender has effectively spoiled the chance of a satisfactory outcome for the officer. Further, the officer's competence is called into question. If the offender had access to the cheque book, why did the officer fail to find it?

Police behaviours that are indicative of trouble

Behaviours which are indicative of trouble for police officers are not just confined to members of the public. There are several terms which usually, although not exclusively, refer to police behaviours which are the harbinger of trouble. Specifically, "over the top", "out of order" and "lost his bottle".

When used about the public, "out of order" is similar to that of "taking the micky" although it does not apply to the deliberate and intentional disobedience to police instruction. For instance, a car driving down a one way street could be "out of order" since the term implies a flagrant abuse or either a legal or normative standard. When used to refer to the behaviours of police officers its meaning is more specific:

After a violent pub fight, which had resulted in over ten arrests and injuries to several of the prisoners, the canteen was busy with the chatter of the night's events. There seemed to be an uneasy feeling that some of the violence had been caused by the inspector's heavy handed behaviour. As one P.C. expressed it. "He was out of order". One man had lost his front teeth in the affray. And as another officer suggested, "When he's (the inspector) got the cavalry behind him he gets into strong arm tactics, pushing and kicking people."

The criticism of the inspector was not based upon his use of force per se: to not sanction the use of force when required would have opened the inspector up to the criticism that he had
"lost his bottle". Rather, it was implicit in the criticism that the amount of force was situationally unjustified. As such, it is not based on the concern with the legal niceties of minimum force but with the occupational desire to lay low and stay out of trouble. Such "heavy handed tactics" raise the possibility of awkward questions having to be answered and jeopardise the security of the relief. If they have to stage a cover up there is always the chance that they will be discovered.

Strategies for Avoiding Trouble

"Bottle" and its corollary "lost his bottle" have wide currency within the police argot, but are elusive concepts to pin down. Powis in his "Glossary of words and phrases commonly used by thieves, cheats, and ponces" (1977) defines it thus:

"Courage, forceful character or nerve. 'He has plenty of bottle' or 'He has lost his bottle'. A variation is where something of no value moral or material is said to have 'No bottle'."

Drivers are often said to have "bottle", when they indulge in high speed chases. Squeezing through a gap between a stationary car and on coming traffic while travelling at eighty miles an hour is a sign of "having bottle". Conversely, the driver who always plays it safe, never taking any undue chances is considered to have "no bottle".

The risks are not only confined to driving but to dealing with potentially violent interactions in a forceful and decisive manner. In this way senior officers are often said to have "lost their bottle", since their concerns with legality and due process temper the more practical impulses of the relief. For instance,
a senior officer was said to have "lost his bottle" because he would not authorise the breaking down of a suspect's door without a warrant. In this example, "Bottle" is not just related to physical risk-taking but being prepared to take personal and organisational risks which might jeopardise one's career.

"Bottle" also has a more subtle meaning which is closely related to the origin of the term. "Bottle" is cockney rhyming slang for "Bottle and Glass": "Class". The class being alluded to is that of a boxer. In boxing, "class" does not just refer to the strong man who hits and punches his way through a bout, but also to the fighter who can duck and weave, tiring his opponent. Similarly, in police usage, "bottle" refers to the ability to keep one's nerve in a situation which is potentially violent and, with skilful use of talk and bluff, calm it down without recourse to force.

Paperwork

Having "bottle" is one way of avoiding trouble in a situation, but another strategy exists which is primarily related to the use of organisationally derived rhetorics to retrospectively justify action. The vehicle for such a device is paperwork. In general, police officers hate paper work. They see their job as overrun by it which diverts them from the real task of policing. In one way though, the mastery of organisational report writing, although viewed as unnecessary, can be used as a key device for staying out of trouble.

The centrality of paper work, the written report on various incidents, is accentuated by the isolation of the police officer's task. Most incidents are dealt with either alone or with one other officer, and there is very little supervision of actual incidents. Instead, the written report often becomes the sole criterion for making judgements about whether an incident has been correctly dealt with. (Cf PSI, 1983: vol iv). But as Manning notes:
Incidents as recorded in formal reports bear a problematic relationship to the actual event. The incident record and the behavioural record are two phenomenologically independent matters. They are two parallel, but slightly disjointed strips of experience". (Manning:1982:126)

Paperwork is an occupational necessity as the following extract from my fieldnotes makes clear:

On car patrol, an officer will often pull up into a minor side road and "sit up" for a while taking the time to fill in his or her pocket book. If there are two of them they will often confer about time, date, place, etc. so that their entries will be roughly the same. Many minor incidents are recorded in the pocket book, especially by probationers who are keen to be able to justify to their sergeants what they have been doing. All major incidents are recorded by everyone.

There are several reasons for the use of a pocket book. It is supposed to provide the first record of an incident, written up soon after the event. As such, it is presumed to be an accurate record of what took place during an incident, undistorted by memory or other factors. This has particular salience for court appearances which are often months after the event, and as a basis for generating other written reports at a much later date.

There are other reasons for using the pocket book which are not concerned with organisational efficiency but occupational survival. They are directed at the possibility that something might go "bent" or "griefy" on an officer. Such strategies are called "Umbrellas" or "Covering". As one P.C. explained:

Paperwork can be used as a good covering device: "Umbrellas". "If something should go wrong", he told me "a complaint against you or something like that, if
you've got it written in your pocket book it can be used as evidence to support you. For instance", he went on, "Say you arrested someone in a fight and there was a delay in getting them to the station because the van had broken down. You must write down what the delay was, why it occurred, as accurate as possible. Otherwise the man's lawyer could say you'd taken him up to the common and beat him up. Unless you've got it in your pocket book and it can be justified to your sergeant, and the courts, you're going to be in the shit."

Bearing in mind Manning's point about the disjunction between the incident and the reported details of it, officers are aware that the reports are not reproductions of incidents but reconstructions. The reconstructions are for a particular audience and therefore they are written in a style and manner which is framed by organisational expectations. For the patrol officer, the crucial relevancy is to try and ensure that only information which portrays him or her in a favourable light reaches senior managers. On the other hand, senior managers are more concerned with ensuring that the correct administrative and legal procedures have been adhered to. Such reconstructions are often used as stylistic devices, for instance:

Two officers sat in the canteen trying to get their reports straight. They had arrested two men and were trying to reconstruct the events. "I said to him, 'would you mind?'", one officer read from his pocket book. "Well I didn't really, I said 'get your fucking arms against the wall', but you can't put that in a report can you?"

The concern with presentation over accuracy can go further. This is no longer referred to as "covering" or "umbrellas" within the argot, but "story-time" or "Jackanory", the latter often being alluded to by the singing of the signature tune of a popular children's television programme that bears the same name.
Consider:

As we are sitting in the canteen, a 'suspects on premises' call comes through. Z and Y jump from their seats and rush down to the area car. The location is only half a mile from the station, and we are there in no time. A pane of glass is smashed in the front door which is open. Z and Y rush in and search the house which appears empty. There is, however, one door on the ground floor which is locked. "Shall I break it down?" asks Z and answers himself with a smiling but considered "yeah". Two hefty cracks with his boot and the door is open. All the woodwork on the door surround is splintered. The room is empty. As Z comes out he looks at the broken frame, turns to me and says conspiratorially "You didn't see that".

Back in the canteen, Y and Z are discussing what they should do about the paperwork. Z has written his initial report, it reads:

"We searched the whole house and, as we believed that the suspect was still on the premises, there was only one room in which he could be in and that was locked on the inside. I thought I heard a noise from inside the room and so broke the door down".

Y adds with a smile "I heard the noise", and then suggests. "If you like you could add that the adjacent room was only separated by a thin partition wall and the noise you heard was another P.C. moving about in the room". Z added this, read through the report and thought that "it would do".

While such examples illustrate minor reconstructions, primarily for the sake of organisational requirements, they are unlikely to compromise the officer legally. But such strategies can be used to substantiate a shaky legal position for an arrest. By falsifying the evidence, reasonable grounds can be provided for a
course of action. "Jackanories", then, move from being a question of style to one of perjury. For instance:

The inspector came into the canteen and asked if someone "wanted a body". It was apparent that one of the prisoners had been arrested, but nobody knew who the arresting officer was. The inspector was looking at the ten or so D.S.U. officers hoping that one of them would volunteer. Nobody did. Instead they volunteered an officer. "361 will take it sir." Reluctantly 361 got up to deal with the prisoner. "I need a witness too". This was awkward also, but after a few moments of silence another officer volunteered, "I'll be a witness sir". "But you were round the back", came another voice. Nobody seemed to care. Somehow the reports would get sorted out.

Extra-legal violence

By far the most controversial resource at the patrol officer's disposal to avoid trouble is the use of extra-legal violence. Within the culture, such behaviour is termed, "summary justice", "street justice", "a good kicking" or a "good hiding". The extent of such behaviour is enormously difficult to gauge. This is not just a problem of "observer" effect. A lone observer, even working for lengthy periods in the field, is unlikely to come across many situations where any force is necessary, let alone extra-legal force. Even then, it is difficult judge what constitutes extra-legal force. For instance, a prisoner is struggling and an officer has got him in a half Nelson position, with his arm twisted up around his back. Gradually the officer is nudging his arm upwards to try and quell the continuing resistance. At what point, if any, does the force used become "excessive"?

The PSI researchers, Smith and Grey (PSI, 1983: Vol iv)
witnessed eight separate incidents during which, in their opinion, excessive force was used. Excessive force is not the same as "street justice" or "summary justice". It may result from an officer "going over the top" or losing his or her temper. "Summary justice", on the other hand, has a more specific meaning referring to extra-legal violence which is used as punishment or retribution. The following story told by an officer illustrates this more exclusive meaning well:

The desk sergeant also told Roger of the fight that had occurred the night before in the charge room. The station sergeant had been questioning a large West Indian suspect when the suspect suddenly went berserk and attacked the sergeant who was alone with the prisoner. It took four officers to restrain the man. The sergeant had been knocked unconscious and had to be taken to hospital. The desk sergeant ended the story with. "But they got him later, right between the bollocks".

Stories like these are frequently related by officers, detailing how they eventually got the upper hand and taught a violent or cheeky offender a lesson. Thus "summary justice" can be used to reinstate lost authority on the street. During a conversation about the level of hostility shown by young West Indian males in Kimberley an officer from another division stated:

"I'd fucking nick 'em. Even if you can't do 'em then because of the numbers I'd get them later when nobody was around. I don't forget a face you know".

A rather subtle variation on this process was indicated in the following story which illustrates how "summary justice" can be seen as making up for what is perceived as a deficiency of the legal system, which is too lenient on offenders:

A prisoner had started to complain of feeling ill,
stomach pains and the lot. A doctor was called who said there was nothing wrong with him and left the station. The prisoner continued to display the symptoms with more intensity and the doctor was called again. The doctor still did not believe that the symptoms were real, but decided to play safe and had the man admitted to hospital. The hospital doctor could find nothing wrong with the man either. He then asked what the man had done. "I told him all about his violent crimes and, on hearing this, the doctor said with a wry smile, 'Well, I think we'll have to have his appendix after all.'" The PC chuckled with glee at the justice of it all.

"Summary justice" and the use of extra-legal force were not just evidenced by the use of stories. On three separate occasions I witnessed behaviour which, in my opinion, constituted the extra-legal use of force and on two occasions was definitely related to retribution. For example:

The inspector started to move the crowd to the outside of the pub. He pushed on towards the door and the lad started to struggle. He was grabbed by three officers and dragged outside still struggling. More officers joined in until there was a circle with the man on the ground in the middle being kicked. Later I heard that the man had lost his front teeth.

The Consequences of Trouble

As with the use of paper work for a covering device, the use of "summary justice" presents the officer with the possibility of organisational and legal sanction. Officers are well aware that such behaviour, as well as less questionable actions, can result in things going "bent", "griefy", "pearshaped", or banana shaped
on them, and therefore resulting in the possibility of a 612 (a formal complaint) being issued against them. These are all the organisational consequences of something "coming back at you", and therefore jeopardising an officer's position. At best he or she will receive a "bollocking" from a superior officer, at worst, formal disciplinary proceedings will be undertaken. This raises the possibility of the case being referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions and a formal legal action being instigated.

The consequences of trouble are not only related to formal organisational sanction but also have a bearing on occupational concerns. To be a competent organisational member, requires an understanding of the working rules of the occupational culture because these provide a mechanism for lessening the chances of trouble arising. For instance, officers will typically castigate their fellows who are found guilty of wrongdoing, not for the act itself, but for being caught. Although such a reaction may seem cynical, it reflects the realisation that "You can't police by the book" and must, inevitably, "bend the rules" in order to successfully perform the job. If an officer fails to avoid "within the job" trouble too often, it indicates to their colleagues that they have not understood the basic principles of policing. Therefore, they may land their colleagues in "the shit" by their ineptitude and cannot be trusted to protect their fellow officers from organisational sanction.

The terms of trouble represent a culturally derived solution to the organisational and environmental problems posed by the practice of policing. While it is true that most encounters police officers have with the public are essentially trouble free, officers are aware that these encounters have the potential to go 'griefy' on them. The result of this awareness is to highlight the officer's need to establish control over incidents, by creating the conditions under which their authority to define and determine resolutions is upheld. The issue of control is not confined to "on the job" matters. There is a spill over effect from incidents on the street to events in the station. A
satisfactory termination of an encounter does not just depend upon the resolution reached at the incident but on the organisational resolution. Unless the paperwork is written with reference to acceptable organisational rhetorics, then the incident can still go 'bent'. 
The terms of trouble indicate how the occupational relevancies of patrol officers are shaped through the interaction between organisation and environment, which create, sustain and transform the nature of the police task through the operation of the cultural rules of the lower ranks. Thus, concern with trouble and its avoidance does not result from the primary organisational mandate of order maintenance or crime control, it is consequent upon the legal and organisational forms through which such tasks are structured. In this sense, while it may be permissible to talk about an organisational goal, for the individual members there are more salient rhetorics, such as career, security, camaraderie, status, etc., which assume far greater significance.

The terms of trouble only relate to one aspect of the patrol officer's work world, the wish to avoid negative consequences as a result of performing street work. An equally important aspect of the officer's work world is the relationship he or she has with the organisation within which they work. This relationship is mediated by senior officers and the relationships that they develop with their colleagues on the street. Of course these are not independent of their "on the job" relevancies, in fact they are heavily dependent upon them.

Paradoxically, despite its hierarchical authority structure, the police organisation has a strong permissive element. This is partly due, as many commentators have noted, to the discretion which is inherent in the office, but it is also a result of the reliance on an inhibitory rule book which is acknowledged more in breach than by observance. The result is an organisation which
is tolerant of many different styles of working. (Chatterton, 1981) The discretionary power of an officer means that for many offences it is within his or her purview to choose not to exercise discretion. One officer will apply the letter of the law and another will not. Nor can either claim by extraneous standards that the other was right or wrong. If criticism is levelled it is more likely to be that "it would have made a good arrest", or been a useful "figure", and thus stressing either the personal utility to the officer or the collective utility to the relief. The discretionary nature and differing interpretations of arrest practice is illustrated by an officer who, after attending a pub brawl, was asked by a colleague:

"Did you get a body?"
"No. I could have", he replied "but I calmed him down instead".

Or, as the following example illustrates:

"How the fuck did you manage to get an arrest for criminal damage in the middle of all that?", asked a younger officer in amazement. "Well, I went up to this bloke and said, 'are you D_H_?'. He said 'no', so I lifted up his dark glasses and said, 'Yes you are. You're nicked'. While you were getting P.O. arrests I was getting a crime arrest.", intimating that he didn't think much of Public Order arrests. "If you read the collator's reports every day and look at the photographs, that's how you get them."

The latitude which discretion and the organisational structure encourages also allows for the construction of particular organisational roles which can be moulded by the selective use of organisational rules and rhetorics. The organisation in this way becomes a resource from which various versions of policing can be constructed and sustained. (van
Maanen, 1983: 278). While this suggests an anarchic organisational structure allowing unrestrained individual autonomy, it would be naive to travel too far down this road. Autonomy there may be, but it is both relative and constrained.

Previous research indicated that there is a fairly rapid convergence of attitudes as the recruit is socialised into the occupation. (van Maanen, 1974 & 1978a). Central to this convergence is the role of the occupational culture, which for the newcomer becomes increasingly relevant in defining the crucial relationships of the patrol officer to senior officers, colleagues and criminals. (Cochrane & Butler: 1980). Clearly, the construction of roles is not independent from the particular occupational and therefore collective relevances that the patrol officer faces. Thus the oft quipped claim by both academics and police officers themselves that there are "as many styles of policing as there are policemen" can be understood as one of the many rhetorics available which serve to emphasise difference at the expense of similarity.

As has been stressed, it is the occupational culture which provides the most salient version of policing for the lower ranks. In this way it can be seen as a "coping device" (Summer, 1907) which acts "as a means of smoothing over the vicissitudes of practice under the organisational mandate". (Fielding, 1984). The occupational culture holds within it, albeit loosely, one version of policing which derives its power by mediating the contradictory position of the patrol officer. This contradictory position can best be conceptualised as arising from the tension between autonomy and dependency, and isolation and solidarity. (Cf. figure 1).

As can be seen from the diagram, the continua stretch from isolation to solidarity and from autonomy to dependency. On one level, the organisation of policing and the police organisation place the patrol officer in an isolated and autonomous position. On the other, however, this isolation and autonomy give rise to solidarity and dependency. Ironically, the legally autonomous and socially isolated position of the constable creates and
The Contradictory Position of the Patrol Officer

SOLIDARITY

sustains the conditions which breed organisational dependency and the occupational solidarity.

Autonomy

Autonomy is related to both "within-the-job" and "on-the-job" control. On the street, the first problem for an officer is establishing and maintaining the right to authoritatively intervene in a situation. Often the presence of
the uniform is enough. When it is not, restitutive action may be necessary, ranging from verbal command through to physical constraint. (Cf Sykes & Brent, 1983; Muir 1977). Where restraint and force are used this is not an extra-legal resource. If compliance is not given by members of the public, this in itself is sufficient to justify the use of force and possibly arrest.

Police officers jealously guard their right to act authoritatively, but they are not mere puppets of the law. They are legally equipped with wide discretionary powers which enable them to use the law selectively on an incident by incident basis, evaluating what is the best resource to use to reproduce order.

In this respect, the hierarchical command structure of the police organisation resembles a "mock" bureaucracy (van Maanen:1983). In spite of the pretention to a military chain of command, patrol work is structurally inappropriate for such a system. It is largely invisible, non routine, open to wide discretionary interpretation and characterised by sporadic activity. Thus the hierarchical command structure possesses far more of a symbolic rather than a substantive character, since the patrol officer is both legally and practically autonomous from supervisory officers for decisions taken on the street. (Chatterton, 1981; Manning,1977; James,1979).

This autonomy on the street from the demands of senior officers is tempered by an organisational dependency upon them. Decisions have to be framed with reference to the formal and informal sanctioning power of those higher within the rank structure. It is this tension between autonomy and dependency which is mediated through the occupational culture. This serves to neutralise the power of superior officers by undermining their credibility to make decisions that affect the practice of street policing. (Holdaway:1983;10)

For the relief officer, the organisational hierarchy does not present itself as a continuous chain but is split into two distinct segments. In the cause of clarity, I shall term these segments as senior officers, comprised of chief inspectors and
above, and supervisory officers comprised of sergeants and inspectors. Supervisory officers are concerned with the day to day operational management of policing and, as such, are in regular and sustained contact with the front line officers. Conversely, senior officers are distanced from the day to day problems of operational policing and are more concerned with management, long term objectives and overall policy. In different ways, both segments challenge the relief's conception of policing, and both challenges are mediated through a culturally held stereotype of superior officers.

Typically, senior officers are viewed as out of touch with the reality of everyday policing, "they haven't got a clue" or "they're on another planet" are comments often used to summarily dismiss references to senior officers. Behind these statements is an implicit challenge to senior officers' capability to determine operational policy and their competency, once removed from the front line, to put forward an alternative conception of police work. As one P.C. expressed it:

"What amazes me is that the job gets done in spite of them. It's the relief that gets it done. For all their fancy plans, it's the lads on the street that have got to implement them."

At the operational level, at least, there is plenty of scope for subverting organisational policy. For instance, as one P.C. related:

"With the introduction of this new scheme the beat crimes section has been abolished under the instruction of the guv'nor" (Ch Supt). However it fulfilled an important function, namely being able to direct a small group of officers to a particular problem especially that of theft from and theft of motor vehicles. "The problem still exists, though, so each relief is putting men on to it but not telling the guv'nors upstairs. They think it's
all hunky dory. They just think what they want to think without knowing what's going on on the ground."

Once an officer is promoted beyond inspector, as one American commentator on the English police observed:

\[\text{......they no longer experience direct contact with social groups and persons who are seen as representatives of evil, and are thus permitted to move symbolically closer to the socially sacred and traditional values of English society. But these senior officers are then deprived of their legitimacy within the organisation which is granted by constables to officers who maintain intermittent contact with the men and activities defined by policemen as containing the essence of the entire enterprise. (Manning1977,p47-48).}\]

The problem for senior officers as they become further removed from the ground is that the control they exercise becomes more and more symbolic. Surprisingly, this is not as a result of their efforts being diverted elsewhere, for instance to policy development, rather, it is taken up by the retrospective checking of decisions taken by those lower in rank. The job description in General Orders for a chief superintendent in charge of a division focuses almost solely on the retrospective nature of the job. This is to the exclusion of any forward planning or strategic management role. The Males report on force organisation and management pointed out:

\[\text{It may seem anomalous that there are instances where a constable makes the decision to arrest, the charge is authorised by a sergeant, yet a senior divisional officer is required to check certain items of the resultant documentation solely to ensure clerical accuracy." (Males Report, 1983:26)}\]
The retrospective nature of the supervisory task means that senior officers are often only concerned with evaluating accounts written in official reports. In some cases, this is executed by evaluating an account against an ideal standard, i.e. this is how a process form should be filled in. In others, they are evaluated by comparing the validity of different accounts to arrive at an assessment of what actually occurred, i.e. when investigating a complaint made by a civilian against a police officer. Therefore these procedures can very easily become one where the quality of the account is far more important than the quality of the act. For instance, one relief officer commented about a senior officer.

"Chief Inspector 'A'", she told me, "was very nit picking about certain things, especially how process forms were worded. For instance, I stopped someone for speeding the other day. On the form I put 'Car A was travelling at eighty miles an hour in a restricted zone', but that wasn't good enough for him. He wanted 'car travelling at eighty miles an hour in a restricted zone on a road kept at public expense'. That's just typical of him."

From the relief officer's point of view, managerial control can be seen as transparent, related to appearances rather than realities or ends rather than means. As long as the job is done and, on paper at least, the right (or plausible) account is given, then senior officers are happy. What actually occurred and how a resolution was achieved is not a relevant criterion for assessing whether an action was successful. Retrospective checking is concerned with the appearance rather than the actuality of competency. Autonomy is therefore maintained from higher level interference by the lower ranks emphasising the importance of appearance and the control of information.

The situation of competing definitions of policing, and the practical ascendency of the lower ranks' version has been tardily acknowledged by police managers as a crucial limitation on their
effectiveness to bring about planned organisational change. (Cf NP docs). Utilising the rhetorics of modern business management theory, "participative management" has been introduced into the Metropolitan Police at the behest of Commissioner Newman. The primary aim of this innovatory step is to increase the level of information flow from the bottom up and create a forum for policy discussions. It is hoped that this consultative process will increase the commitment to organisational change from those who are most likely to have to implement it. In practice, however, participative management is seen as an incorporationalist strategy which offers little power to the lower ranks. As one PC described it:

"When the new action plan came out we were all excited. They introduced it by saying that, for the first time in the history of the MET, we are going to ask you, the PC, what you think about how this job should be run. We put forward a number of proposals and sent them up to the next level.....when the document finally came back it bore no relationship to what we had said.... What's the point of asking us what to do if what you say is ignored. They might as well not have bothered and let the chief superindentent write his own report. They came back to us this year and I said 'Get lost. What's the point of getting involved since you've already made up your minds.'"

Or as another expressed it:

"Participative management hasn't made any difference the way it's operated here. It's had no significant impact because the guv'nors have already made up their minds."

Perhaps, albeit inadvertently, Participative Management has served to heighten the distance between the ranks. By seeking to reduce the autonomy of the lower ranks by increasing their stake
in organisational decision-making, while at the same time being seen to be engaged in a cosmetic exercise, it merely heightens the feeling of distance by allowing expectations to rise and then leaving them unfulfilled.

In summary then, for the relief, the further up the hierarchy a superior officer is positioned, then the further away he or she is from the day to day problems of patrolling. Senior officers' concern with legal and procedural adherence is seen as indicative of having "lost their bottle". Rather than having as their primary concern the welfare of the officers under their command and the day to day problems that arise from the practice of patrol work, their new reference group is their own superior officers whom they are striving to join. It is this situation that gives rise to another common epithet about senior officers, "He's just after his next pip."

From the point of view of the relief officer, the senior officers on the division are often remote and distanced from their every day concerns. Indeed, many of the officers I spoke to did not even know the names of their senior officers at the station. This lack of contact and knowledge adds to the feeling that senior officers represent the anonymous face of the organisation, thus providing an abstract threat to the autonomy of the relief.

Conversely, the relief inspector and the relief sergeant play a crucial role in determining the quality of an officer's working life. In the MET at least, the role of the relief inspector is somewhat ambivalent. On the one hand, they are concerned with the day to day function of the relief in its patrol duties. They work the same shifts, patrol, and, at night, are often the highest ranking officer available on the division. Increasingly, however, the role is becoming more management orientated: liaising with senior officers, implementing policy changes at ground level, instigating community initiatives, and so on. The inspector is thus caught between the roles of the 'practical cop' and the 'management cop'. (Ianni, 1983; Ianni & Ianni, 1983; Chatterton, 1981)
As van Maanen has noted with reference to sergeants, it is possible to draw an ideal typical construct of the differing role performances that sergeants' create for themselves depending on how they choose to locate themselves within the various organisational rhetorics (van Maanen, 1983). Following van Maanen, Chatterton (1981) has illustrated how some will emphasise their administrative function, carving out their role from a particular version of the organisation, while others will see themselves as practical policemen, using different but no less plausible versions of the organisation to defend and generate their role. The administrator is primarily concerned with making sure that the official records are kept in order, that paperwork is properly filed and that the demands of senior managers for statistical information is provided. On the other hand, the 'practical copper' is orientated to the everyday problems of patrolling, with providing moral and physical back up to the relief, protecting them from disciplinary action and so on. In short, the administrator is orientated to the management version of the organisation and the 'practical copper' is orientated to the street level officer's version.

Inspectors are placed in an ambiguous role position which means that they have to embrace both supervisory styles. Sergeants are able to individualise their role, with one being a patrol sergeant and another a station sergeant. The inspector has to combine both roles under the same persona. This duality creates a high degree of tension and leads to the almost unanimous disdain of inspectors. For instance, one inspector saw his job as supportive and supervisory:

"I don't tell the men what to do. They know their job and I know each of them personally and have faith in everyone of them that they can come and see me and we'll try and sort it out."

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"I don't tell the men what to do. They know their job and I know each of them personally and have faith in everyone of them that they can come and see me and we'll try and sort it out."

Much of this inspector's time was spent patrolling in an unmarked
car which he saw as necessary because:

"It's a bit different here, because anything can flare up so you've got to be around."

The inspector portrayed his role as that of the practical copper, leaving his officers to get on with the job, sorting out problems, and providing back up and support. While the inspector may have seen himself as part of the relief, the relief officers did not. For instance, when he patrolled in his unmarked car this was not seen as providing back up but as underhand surveillance of his officers, for example:

Sergeant to PC: "What's ...(insp) up to?"
PC: "Snooping around"
Sergeant to me: "As you can gather we're not very impressed by our inspector."

The same inspector's concern with community liaison also caused derision and was seen as indicative of his management rather than street level orientation, and his intervention in street work was unwelcomed:

PC: "So what did you talk to our boss about."
CN: "Politics most of the time."
PC: "Typical - he's just after another pip - not that I mind, its just the way he goes about it".
CN: "What do you mean?"
PC: "Nicking bodies off people for a start, re-arresting someone after they've been arrested. He interferes."

Other inspectors were viewed in a similar vein:

"Inspectors! They can't be trusted to give you back up. I went to this serious R.T.A. A senior officer needs to be there. Although he was out and about he didn't arrive
at the scene. When he came back to the station he asked if it had all been quiet. John asked him if he hadn't heard anything over the radio. "Oh it mustn't have been working', he replied."

Similarly:

"Last year there was some trouble on the estate and the P.C who was dealing with it lost his cool. Rather than offering him support Inspector 'T' balled him out. But he couldn't handle the incident, you should have seen him, he was shaking all over, he'd lost his bottle.

In spite of this universal disdain for inspectors, the relief does have a feeling of what constitutes a good inspector - the practical copper, who is orientated to the concerns of the relief not to those of management, as this example from Surrey reveals:

"Inspectors! Got no fucking bottle, that's their problem. B..... is the only one who comes down into the station office, the only one who knows what it's about." From casual observation he was the only inspector to be regularly found in the station office and therefore in close contact with the relief. Yesterday he was still there at 3am, playing handball in the front office with the station officer.

This feeling about what constitutes a good inspector also extends to those who are prepared to get their hands dirty, both literally and metaphorically, in the grime of police work. For instance:

"I was out one night in the middle of January, freezing cold, and I came across this old inspector - he's moved now - he was on his hands and knees, covered in snow,
hands covered in dirt. What was he doing? Replanting all the plants that the yobs had ripped up - Now that's a good inspector!"

Even so, inspectors are inspectors and perhaps the most telling comment came from an experienced officer (PC A) who had just been transferred from another force. He'd been working on the relief for about a month and had just been interviewed by the inspector:

PC A: "The Guv'nor seems alright".
PC B: Looks askance
PC A: "For an Inspector I mean".

Dependency

The relief officers' vehemence against inspectors has far more force than that directed against senior officers. Regardless of their efforts to undermine and neutralise the power of the inspector to influence and check their autonomy, they are organisationally dependent upon them. Like sergeants, the relief inspector in the MET plays a central role in the organisation and administration of the relief. John van Maanen has suggested that, in the USA, the role of the sergeant can be classified into three distinct activities. In the MET this is also applicable to inspectors: (van Maanen:1983)

a) Personnel Brokering: organisational deployment, arranging leave and rest days, assigning people for courses, handing out and sanctioning overtime, etc.

b) Institutional Display and Documentation: sanctioning charges, checking paperwork, keeping various station records, informing officers of changes in General Orders,
taking part in parades, and front line supervision.

c) The Mobilisation of Effort: motivating officers to be more than just uniform carriers and, therefore, to keep their figures up; deploying officers to particular problems, e.g. vice, traffic etc.; distributing formal and informal rewards for work well done, public and private praise, the slap on the back or recommending an officer for commendation.

All these activities bear a direct relationship on the patrol officer's working environment. While they may have theoretical autonomy on the street, within the station the sergeants and inspectors hold enormous institutional resources to gain adherence to their demands. They can deploy officers to unfavourable beats; assign them to inside duties, such as VDU operator, front desk gaol-keeper; refuse permission to go on courses; assign them to a difficult working partner; block or sanction promotion, and so on. All of these informal sanctions are readily available to sergeants and inspectors and can be manipulated to an effective mechanism for informal social control which can be far more effective than the formal system of control contained within the disciplinary procedures.

An instance is the informal sanctioning power that is held within the distribution of overtime. In Kimberley, there is a theoretical maximum of fifty hours of overtime, per person per month. Given a relief strength of forty and an average rate of overtime pay of four pounds per hour, this gives a theoretical potential of £96,000 worth of overtime per year at the sergeants' and inspectors' disposal. It is unlikely that the theoretical maximum is every reached, (although during the miners' strike it was exceeded many fold), but, even if only one-third of it is allocated, there is still £32,000 worth of bonus money to be distributed per year.

Since overtime is keenly sought, its distribution presents senior officers with a powerful tool to reward compliant
officers. However, favouritism has to be tempered in line with the relief's own conception of fairness:

Some people had been banned from applying for overtime as they had got too much. I got the impression that the problem was not finding people to do the work but of allocating it fairly so that everyone got a slice of the cake. For instance, the sergeant was complaining that one P.C. had rung in after being sick on the Thursday to see if he could work on the Friday, (a Bank holiday and therefore at double time). The sergeant had refused even though he was short staffed, saying it was "a bit cheeky and not fair on those who had worked".

Deployments can also be used as rewards, even if they do create tensions:

That's four fucking times he's been gaoler this week. I wouldn't mind if he pulled his weight at other times, but it's only so he can swat for his fucking promotion exam, while the rest of us work."

Or they can be used as punishments:

"I don't know what I've done, but I've upset the sergeant somehow. All week I've been on beat six and seven. It's like a morgue, it only needs a car patrol. You don't see anyone, and there's nowhere to have a tea stop".

The above concerns represent internal organisational aspects which link the inspectors and sergeants to their officers. Paperwork, on the other hand provides the link between an officer's work on the street and the police organisation. In this way paperwork represents the formal intelligence system of the police organisation. Without it the police organisation is blind to the activities of its officers. Once paperwork is
submitted there is the possibility of organisational comeback. Sergeants and inspectors, by checking paper work and "squaring" it if formal sanction could be applied, can lessen the risk of such sanction. For instance, a young probationer of only a couple of months' service had just completed a process form for a minor traffic offence and handed it to the sergeant to check:

"What colour was the vehicle? You haven't filled it in?"
"I think it was yellow but I'm not very sure".
"Is it in your pocket book?"
"No Sarge"
"Well, unless you know, we might as well lose this form because you're going to look pretty stupid if the car turns out to be black."

This form of protection extends past the probationary period as another example illustrates:

Jeff didn't spend a long time eating as he had to try and find some missing documents on a drugs arrest. After searching high and low he still couldn't find them and they were needed tomorrow for charging.
"Sarge, what shall I do about those papers?"
"What's it for?"
"Drugs"
"How much?"
"Not much"
"It sounds like a caution or an NFA (No Further Action)".

Dependency is not just a one way relationship for, although sergeants and inspectors hold the institutional power, they need the co-operation of their officers to gain compliance. Over-reliance on formal discipline could be taken as indicative of an officer who cannot control the relief. Thus, both inspectors and sergeants are constrained by their own images within the organisation. If it is possible to square a mistake before it
goes any further then their own supervisory skills are not called into question. It is the managing of appearances that is crucial in this respect. Small displays of insubordination, given the wrong audience, can put a supervisory officer in a bad light as the following example illustrates:

PC 'A' (an officer of three years experience) walked into the canteen. The sergeant looked up as he approached. "Don't you ever do that to me again", he snarls "Not in front of someone from another relief...just learn to keep your mouth shut". The sergeant turns to me to explain what has happened. "I says to him ...... 'Would you mind answering that call?' as everybody else was busy. He turns to me and says 'Sarge quite honestly I don't give a shit'". The sergeant turned back to the PC "Just watch that mouth of yours, because next time .....(Missing Data)...." "I can only offer you my apologies" replies the PC as he moves across the canteen to get his dinner. "He's a nice enough lad", continued the sergeant "but every time he opens his mouth...."

But this dependency goes further; relief officers, regardless of rank, are vulnerable to the vicissitudes of the internal discipline code. This is particularly so if they are engaged in the unpredictability of street work. While constables are dependent on their sergeants and inspectors to "square" things, the converse can also be true. For instance:

"Over the radio came a call to a sudden death. Although officially at meal break the sergeant thought he should attend and collared PC 'F' on the way out to accompany him. When we arrived on the scene the patrol car was already there. The sergeant backed up the car. There was a loud crash and crunch. "Fuck it" he exclaimed, as he gently eased the car forwards. "Nothing damaged", he stated hopefully as Andy inspected the rear of the car.
He had backed into the patrol car. There seemed to be no damage to his car, but the other's left-hand tail lights were all smashed......Once the incident had been dealt with we headed back to the station, the sergeant trying to figure out ways of covering up for the accident. (If he reported the accident he would be immediately suspended from driving and possibly banned for a fixed period.) The plan therefore, was to buy a new tail light and fix it himself that evening with the help of the rest of the relief. Whether they were successful I do not know. However, several days later the sergeant was still driving.

Neither are sergeants immune from organisational problems which require the intervention of a higher ranking officer to put right. As one sergeant complained about his inspector:

"He never backs you up, he just drops you in it". He scanned the canteen for uninvited ears and then went on to explain what had happened. "I was supposed to go on this one day course, but I was on nights, really shagged out, I forgot. I could have cancelled it but I just didn't think."

As a result, he was in trouble with a Divisional Officer who wanted an explanation. "I went to Mr (insp), expecting some support. He just said, 'It's your problem' and he wouldn't back me up. Anyway I squared it myself. I went to the C.I. (Chief Inspector) - a really great bloke....put my hands up to what I'd done. He just said 'It's alright', and squared it like that. That's a good bloke he stands by us and backs us up."

He went on talking to everyone around the table about not getting any back up, and then to me, "If someone comes to me I might give them a bollocking myself, but then I'd square it and that'd be the end of it." He hesitated slightly, "but don't get me wrong, not for anything
serious like - just trivia."

The discipline code represents the most effective resource at a supervisory officer's disposal to gain compliance, since it covers working practice, the relations of deference and demeanour between ranks and peers, and the private lives of officers. Its power lies not so much in the explicit nature of what is sanctionable, but by being sufficiently vague to rely heavily on interpretation and to be all embracing. For example, the discretionary power of the constable has to be reconciled with point f, section four of the discipline code (4f henceforth) which specifies that a police officer will be neglecting his or her duty if they "fail to report anything that is their duty to report". Similarly, what constitutes "any unnecessary violence to any prisoner or other person with whom he may be brought into contact in the execution of his duty" (8b)? As Chatterton illustrates, such issues are not merely academic. Sergeants do threaten their officers with neglect of duty if they fail to exercise discretion in a particular way. (Chatterton, 1983).

Due to the difficulty of detection, these more serious breaches of the discipline code provide but a scant resource to senior officers in their quest for deterrent factors to ensure compliance, although they do serve as powerful reminders of the penalties involved in breaking the discipline code. More important, are the host of minor and less substantial rules, infringement of which can result in being "stuck on". For instance, an officer is in breach of the disciplinary code if s/he "idles or gossips while on duty" (4b), "is uncivil to any member of the public" (8c), is "insubordinate by word, act or demeanour" (2a), "omits to make any necessary entry in an official document or book" (4h), "directly or indirectly solicits any gratuity, present or subscription without the consent of the commissioner"(7c).
The crucial point about the discipline code is that, in the main, it is neither observed nor enforced. Officers regularly receive free and discounted food and refreshment at the local cafe, fail to record stops, leave their beats, do not put their hats on when leaving the patrol car, fail to report damage to a police vehicle and, perhaps more importantly but less frequently, sign false statements, make false misleading and inaccurate statements, and do so both with and without the approval of the supervisory officers.

Of the 57 separate points contained within the disciplinary code (Police Federation, 1965: 69-72) my field notes document 30 separate and different infractions, many of them routine. In addition to the ones listed above, they include drinking on duty, being absent without leave, using unnecessary force and being rude to members of the public.

Many infringements of the disciplinary code are informally sanctioned by supervisory officers. Consider the following example:

It was an extremely cold morning. Although we had been posted to beat 2, John had decided to walk to the other side of beat three and see if we could get a cup of tea in the sentry post of the military base. We knocked on the window and were warmly welcomed as tea was duly made. Five minutes later Janice and Phil arrived, joked that they thought that they would find us here, and joined us for early morning tea. Shortly afterwards Mick arrived. The entire sub-divisional foot patrol was now ensconced in the warmth of the sentry box. "Oh shit" declared John, as the sergeant's patrol car pulled up alongside the tea hole. Everyone looked a little uneasy as the sergeant got out of his car and entered the sentry box. "We're just off sarge", declared John. The sergeant gave a broad grin. "It's alright. Stay and finish your tea", he declared as he helped himself from the pot.
Or similarly:

The inspector was deploying his officers "......have you been out in a vehicle this week?", he asked one of his younger officers.
"Yes, I was out last night".
"Officially I mean".
"It was sir, but I don't mind going out again".

Such toleration of disciplinary infraction has a double edge for relief officers; while it makes their job more pleasant, they realise that it can be used against them at any time if they get on the wrong side of a sergeant or inspector and, since the rules are all-pervasive, finding a justifiable reason would not be difficult as the following example illustrates:

"As we were driving down the high street, Steve saw that Dave was walking again. We stopped and Dave hopped in the back. He was bubbling with a story. "That Mr ...insp... is a real wanker, he just threatened to stick me on".
"What for?"
"Farting!"
Steve and Mick roared with laughter. Dave explained what had happened. He had been in the front office and felt the need to "break wind and I let out the most deadly fart." Mr ...... heard it but could not identify the culprit so, when he asked who was responsible, Dave blamed Mark, and Mark turned it into a joke that Mr..... could not rebuff. Some minutes later Mr..... was in an adjoining office and Dave felt the need to "break wind again and, due to the angle of my buttocks, produced a loud and resounding fart. Mr..... stormed in and went loopy". He threatened Dave with discipline and told him that he'd "get him for every little thing from now on". "What could he stick you on for?" joked Steve.
"Flatulence!" suggested Mick as he took hold of his radio and produced a loud and unmistakable farting noise with his lips. As soon as Steve had finished Mick did the same again and then Steve again, until Dave begged them to stop, as he would get the blame.

Rather than using the discipline code to gain compliance, a more important strategy, recognised by both patrol officers and their supervisors, is using supervisory power to offer protection from the disciplinary code and thus ensure compliance to other more valued norms. This is especially the case for incidents on the street that have gone "griefy". By "losing paper", "shutting one's eyes", sanctioning a false statement, "putting in a good word", providing written reports for disciplinary inquiries, a supervisory officer can lessen or avert the impact of disciplinary proceedings. This is no light incentive to stay on the right side of one's supervisors. As the PSI report revealed, "within the past ten years the mean number of complaints per officer was 4.4." (PSI 1983, vol iii: 114) Therefore, at some point or other, a patrol officer will undoubtedly need such protection.

This dependency is double edged. Sergeants and inspectors are sometimes guilty by deed, but more often by association. "If the shit hits the fan" and they are called to account, they are equally dependent on the support of their officers to maintain their integrity. Dependency then, leads to reciprocity.

Isolation

It is not only the disciplinary code that creates dependencies and reciprocal relationships between officers. There are other factors which isolate the police officer, limiting their range of social contacts with people outside of the job and thus, at the same time, making them more dependent on each other. Social isolation creates group solidarity. There
are two broad factors which serve to isolate patrol officers from wider social contacts. The first is the demands of the shift system, the second is the nature of the work itself.

The shift system is arduous and disruptive. Over a twenty eight day period, starting on a Monday an officer works seven nights (2200-0600), followed by a quick change over to two days of lates (1400-2200) which means coming off duty at 0600 on the Monday and returning to work at 1400 on the same day. Two days off are followed by three early turns (0600-1400), Monday and Tuesday are off again, returning on Wednesday for five late turns, followed immediately by four early turns finishing on Thursday afternoon. Friday through to Monday 2200 are free and the cycle starts again. Within this twenty eight day system, to make it comparable with an ordinary five day week, there is a floating rest day which, theoretically, means that an officer will have one working day off during the month. In practice it is worked more often than not, due to under-manning. The disruption to an officer's private life is exacerbated by other factors such as court appearances, which mean that rest days often have to be worked and overtime, which although it is supposedly voluntary, often has to be worked at short notice.

Clearly, working such hours makes outside social contact difficult to sustain. Evening classes, sporting activities, social engagements, courtship, etc., do not fit easily into such a variable and unpredictable system. The result is that officers are heavily dependent upon their immediate families and colleagues for off duty support, but even this presents problems since shift work is not conducive to family life.

I've been doing nights now for sixteen years. I'd like a break. It's hard on your family. When I'm on nights I only get to see the kids for an hour or two. I'd like to move to an administrative post maybe or perhaps the juvenile bureau, but I don't think that that is likely. I'm not due for a move for another three years."
The housing policy also means that police officers are isolated from members of the public and are thrown back on to colleagues for off duty support. All single probationers are expected to live in a police section house. This is a practical policy as they are often posted away from their family home and, as they are likely to be moved about at short notice, it is therefore convenient for getting to work. In Surrey, all but one of the probationers and several of the more experienced officers lived in the section house. There are also large financial inducements for doing so. The rent allowance allotted to each officer was deemed to cover full board in the section house. Thus for £52 per month (1983 prices) a small but adequate furnished room was provided, with freshly laundered sheets once a week. There was constant hot water, a communal room, and a washing machine and tumble drier. In addition, four good meals a day were provided. In effect, officers were fed and housed from their rent allowance at a cost of thirteen pounds per week. Such a financial inducement is hard to forsake as the cars that lined the station forecourt and the hi-fi systems and record collections in the rooms testified to the lifestyle that it helped to subsidise.

But there are other less instrumental reasons for living in the section house. As section 3.b(2) of the disciplinary code states, "A member of the force shall not reside at premises which are not for the time being approved by the commissioner." This regulation has probably a greater effect in limiting the range of housing choices available to officers by creating an ethos of control rather than by its actual enforcement. Officers automatically rule out certain possibilities as unsuitable. For instance sharing a house with a group of students from a local polytechnic. However, stories are recounted of officers being asked to move and thus reinforcing the perception that the job has the power to influence the choice of residence:

John also talked about a colleague from Essex who had lived on a council estate before he joined the job. His
senior officers wanted him to move out of the council flat where he had lived for some time, saying that it wasn't suitable. But he said he was happy and complained to the council who kicked up a fuss, saying "what's wrong with the estate?" The force had to back down.

Similarly:

Sally, who had been a nurse before joining the job several months previously, complained that she hated the section house. "I used to live in a rented flat with some friends before I joined, but you can't do that in the job. Joan (another WPC) and I are thinking of buying a place though."

The combination of being liable to transfer, pecuniary advantage, and force policy in the field of housing serves to isolate the neophyte from the general housing market and, therefore, to restrict the development of social contacts outside the working group.

This tendency is not limited to probationers. Even with the demise of police houses which grouped police officers in a particular area, there is a trend for officers to reside in the same area. In Surrey, many of the married officers lived on a new estate giving rise to the comment from one PC that, "If another police officer moves into our road there won't be any civilians left."

This drift towards "police ghettos" is exacerbated by several factors in Surrey. The development was in easy reach of the station yet far away enough not to be "living on top of the job". Further, the price range between £30,000 and £60,000 was affordable for most officers and contained enough variation for individual needs.

In the MET the range of housing available is much wider than in Surrey. However, with the exception of those who lived in the section house, none of the officers lived on the division. As
many officers put it. "Who'd want to live in a dump like this!"
Officers did not want to live near where they worked, an
understandable factor given the level of hostility displayed to
the police in the area and, to give substance to this, an off
duty officer had recently been attacked and severely injured on
the sub-division. Further, like many of the aspiring and
upwardly mobile groups, they have taken to abandoning the inner
city for the pleasanter and safer environment of the suburbs.
Thus many officers lived out on the Essex border land.

One of the consequences of this is that, rather than
officers being part of the communities in which they work, they
are absent from them. This has a direct bearing on their
relationship with the poorer section of the working class who
suffer most heavily from the problems of poor housing,
unemployment, discrimination, etc. It is this stratum of society
which makes the most demands on the police service, but also
bears the brunt of proactive police work. If, in reality, the
Dixon of Dock Green image of the local constable living on his
beat and knowing everybody on it ever existed, it can now surely
be laid to rest.

The control that the organisation possesses over where
officers work and live is in stark contrast to that found in most
occupations. For instance:

John had just brought a new house in Essex near the
station where he worked. He had sold his car to pay for
the legal fees and was going to either cycle or walk to
work. But then he was told "out of the blue" that he was
being transferred to Kimberley. So now he has to walk
half an hour to the station to take a tube, then get a
bus from the tube to the police station. "All in all
about an hour and a half." He appealed against the
decision but the guv'nor had said, "You can get a lift
from one of the lads in Kimberley." John asked, "What
happens if he's on annual leave?", and was told curtly,
"We'll cross that bridge when we come to it."
Another officer told a similar story.

I got the order on a Friday, quite out of the blue. I wasn't working when it was posted in the order book, my mate brought it round the next day. I had been planning to move further into the country to B ...... and buy a new house. I had to pull out of that, it would have meant too much travelling.

Whether such incidents were the result of informal discipline I do not know, but it was generally recognised that such a policy could be used as a particularly pernicious form of social control. As a sergeant who had transferred from a county force illustrated:

"In the county, force discipline can be far more effective." He said. "When you've got an area the size of that, you can post somebody one hundred and fifty miles away. So they got a house and a mortgage. If you're moved that far it hurts. And if you sell up and move, they can always move you back again. I know one chap who used to spend five days away from home on a camp bed and only come home at weekends. It isn't like that in the Met. They only tend to transfer you on the district so you can always commute, but it's still pretty inconvenient."

The control over housing provides the organisation with a powerful resource which can also be used for other ends; for instance, to sanction how an officer chooses to conduct his private affairs.

"I'd been a perfectly good copper for seven years, then my marriage broke up, and I ran off with somebody else. I told what I thought to be a friend on the relief who
told the sergeant, and soon everybody knew. I went from being on annual report, to being on three monthly". He saw this as a form of demotion which, in a way, it was since, "I could no longer work alone, was under constant supervision, just like a probationer." The most embittering part of the experience was that his reports had gone down, "despite the fact that I was doing the job just the same. It was only because of my private life." He then transferred to another station and his reports immediately improved, "The last one was very good."

"What really got me was the job insisted that I moved back into the section house while 'I sorted myself out'. I didn't want to move back in but felt that I had to. If I want to get divorced I don't see that it's any concern of theirs. As you can probably tell I'm quite bitter about this job at the moment."

Isolation not only comes from force policy but it is inherent in the organisation of patrol work. Generally, preventative patrol is carried out either singly or in pairs. Although the relief is a team, the organisation of preventative patrol means that, for most of the time, patrolling is an individual and lonely affair. This sense of isolation is heightened by the statistically unlikely, but ever present, fear that danger could be just around the corner. As officers continually reminded me, 'You never know what's going to happen next in this job'. This orientation to the dangerous aspects of the job is constantly reworked by the recounting of stories highlighting dangerous and exciting incidents that officers have dealt with. The mundane, routine and uneventful aspects of police work are lost as tales of dangerous and fast chases, narrow escapes, and the disarming of armed suspects are recounted with judicious narrative embellishment. It is easy to dismiss such stories as Macho reconstructions which serve to recreate policing into conformity with the expectation of excitement,
danger etc. which is contradicted by the mundane reality. However, within the inner city there are enough serious assaults on officers to make such talk a powerful reminder of the everyday threat. When I first worked in Kimberley I was told by three separate people of an officer who, six weeks earlier, had been responding to "a suspects on premises call", and narrowly missed death as he was attacked by a man armed with a machete. He was only saved by his helmet deflecting the blow from his skull.

Or as another example from my fieldnotes illustrates:

It was my first day on patrol, I was sitting in the station office waiting for briefing to begin. I watched and listened as news of Yvonne Fletcher the policewoman killed outside the Libyan embassy came in. Information about her condition was avidly sought and given. At just after two o'clock news came over that she had died. As the relief gathered there was no mock sympathy or even outrage. There seemed to be a resigned acceptance and a quiet anger about the events. It was not just that a woman had been shot, but a police officer just like them, which served to remind them of their potential vulnerability. As one officer turned and said to her neighbour "It makes you wonder, when you go out there, doesn't it, will I be next".

This omnipresent concern with physical threat was also brought out clearly by an officer who, as we left the station on night patrol, turned to me and asked:

Are you racially prejudiced"?
"No, not really", I tentatively replied, wondering what such an upfront question was leading to.
"I wasn't 'till I worked here but I am now, so if they jump on your back I'll jump on theirs and if they jump on my back you jump on them."
I nodded.

As other commentators on the police have noted (Skolnick, 1975; Muir, 1977; Westley, 1970; Van Maanen, 1978b; Riener, 1978), the occupational concern with assessing people's moral worth and the categorisation of people as potential assailants is not only confined to working hours. The development of a "police mind" is carried over to non working hours and, with it, the habit of observation and suspicion. As one PC expressed:

"You can take nothing at face value in this job. I've been in this job ten months and I'm walking down the road off duty and I double take. You just can't help it."

It is then difficult to break out of a police mentality when off duty and this gives rise to the common expression that "you're never off duty in this job".

The content of the work also serves to promote a feeling among officers that they are different from other occupational groups. Not only do they have to routinely deal with the dangerous and the violent, but also the down-trodden, the ill, the unbalanced and the insane. Such work is both symbolically, and sometimes literally, "shit work". Van Maanen noted that dealing with the "rubbish" of society leads police officers to view themselves as contaminated, being tainted by association. As one of his respondants expressed it, "This is the only job where you've got to wash your hands before you take a piss." In Kimberley a sergeant voiced a similar sentiment as we surveyed the blood stained floor after a violent siege had ended in an attempted suicide. The victim had been brought into the charge room before being taken to hospital.

"That's what Kimberley's like. It's full of fucking nutters, we're just a dustbin for the trash of society. You've seen it and you've seen people getting hit. 19 and 20 year olds come in here green, they're expected to
deal with this rubbish all day. In twelve months they get hard ....we're just a fucking dustbin. A twenty four hour social service."

This feeling of constituting an out group is further illustrated by police officers' perception of being stigmatised by the general public. Maureen Cain's research in the 1960s illustrated that a substantial minority of officers thought that they had difficulty in sustaining relationships with people outside the force. In Riener's study (1978) fifty-two per cent of officers mentioned examples of hostility, suspiciousness and ostracism by members of the public. This was reflected by officers' behaviour in Kimberley. For instance:

As we were patrolling down ------ street, a busy shopping area, a man approached Steve. "I thought it was you," he said "I didn't know you were a policeman". They chatted for a while and then the man went on his way. Steve told me that the man was a regular in his local and, although he'd been drinking there for sometime, he didn't let on that he was a police officer, because, "people are a bit funny sometimes."

This feeling was echoed by another officer:

"I don't know what happened, somebody must have laced my drink or something. I had to be carried home. That's the last time I'm going to drink at a civilian party."

This distancing from civilians is also inherent due to the fear that is engendered by their authority role. As one officer explained about the problem of setting up a police contact bureau on an estate:

"It's mainly advice work, people with problems, wanting to know about the law. But most of the information comes off
the street. If people have got something to tell you they
don't want to be seen coming in here."

Police officers are also reluctant to talk to the public about
what police work is really like. As one experienced officer
expressed it, "If people knew what this job was really like
they'd have a fit". Since the reality of police work involves
habitual rule breaking, at times amounting to rank illegality,
cover-ups and perjury, it is indeed difficult for officers to
talk about their work. As one of van Maanen's American
informants eloquently expressed it:

"How the fuck can I tell anyone who ain't a cop that I lie a
little in court or that sometimes I won't do the shit on the
street 'cause I'm tired or that I made some asshole 'cause
he was just all out wrong. If I told people that they'd
think that I'm nothing but a turd in uniform. The only
people that can understand are people who've had to pull the
same shit." (van Maanen, 1974: 103).

Solidarity

The corollary of social and occupational isolation is the
development of a strong sense of occupational solidarity. This
solidarity takes the form of group norms which serve to minimise
both "on" and "within the job" trouble. While "on the job"
trouble creates the need for mutual support and protection
against physical harm, "within the job" trouble, on the other
hand, stems from the problems created by the routine infraction
of the discipline code. To a degree it is recognised that
disciplinary infraction is avoidable and officers court trouble
by flouting the rules too often. Even so, patrol officers are
aware that you "can't police by the book" and that "the guv'nors
are quite happy for you to break the rules, until the wheel comes off, then they just drop you in it". As already indicated, the "guv'nors'" are still implicated by their relief officers' disciplinary infraction and illegality and will sometimes cover for their officers, but this cannot be taken for granted. Thus there is a mutual insurance policy which is related to the control of information. For both lesser and more serious infractions the least that is expected is silence and, where necessary, active collaboration to keep them hidden either from the guv'nors or from the scrutiny of the courts and the internal complaints department. Consider the following lengthy extract from my fieldnotes which brings together many of the themes discussed in this chapter:

It is a sticky summer's night. Although it is after midnight, there are still many people on the streets - mainly young revellers, either returning home after a night on the town or the late birds, who are just starting out. It has already been a busy night, and John has decided to take his meal break later than planned as he is expecting it to be even busier when the clubs start to turn out.

We drive down to the King's Arms, a pub and local night club with a reputation for trouble. John pulls up the van. He is watching the bouncer who is arguing with four men. John just waits and watches until the matter appears to be resolved and the parties go their separate ways. His main focus of concern is that the bouncer is a disqualified driver and, as he lives several miles away, he almost undoubtedly drove to work. He and Sarah discuss which of the cars in the vicinity might be his. John decides to go and have a word with him and, when he comes back, he radios through to the station to say that there might be trouble outside the pub later, so it would be worth keeping an eye on. John continues to sit,
watching and waiting. The Panda car pulls up on the other side of the road and Mark gets out and comes over to John to find out what is going on. I cannot hear exactly what is going on, but it appears as if the four men who had been arguing with the bouncer are out for a fight.

Two of the four men are now walking past the front of the pub. The Panda driver goes and talks to them. They are both fashionably dressed in their early twenties. They explain to Paul that the other two men are trying to pick a fight with them. Paul and Mark decide to go and have a look for them. John gets in the van and resumes watching the front of the club. More people are leaving now, and many of them are very drunk. John complains to me that the trouble at the club is all the manager's fault, "Because he doesn't give a damn who he lets in". After about five minutes Paul and Mark can be seen struggling with the two men on the opposite corner. (According to the story told later by Paul, when he approached the men they gave him a drunken torrent of abuse, and Paul decided to "nick em"). Both men are white, in their early twenties, they are very drunk. John quickly moves the van in and jumps out. The men are writhing and struggling. They are roughly carted over to the back of the van, still thrashing. Mark puts his handcuffs on Blondie, Paul throws Brown into the back of the van. There is the sound of a struggle. As I look into the van Mick is pushing Brown down onto the seat, his hand on his shoulders. Brown is kicking. Paul brings his fists up in front of the man's face. He turns, sees me, the fist turns int to a pointed finger. "You fucking ........."

The other man is put in the van, his arms hand cuffed behind his legs. He is laughing at his predicament as we drive off. Mark and Sarah join in the merriment. "Don't you fucking laugh at my brother." Blondie roars
with more laughter. Sarah is giggling, almost hysterically. "He's good at yoga isn't he". John and Mark laugh. Brown is still swearing and screaming about not laughing at his brother.

Paul follows the van into the station yard. Paul escorts Blondie into the charge room, his hands on Blondie's shoulder, they look more like old buddies. John brings Brown in. The situation has calmed down now. Brown is told to sit behind the charge desk. Blondie is left standing, guarded by one officer. Someone fetches the station sergeant. He comes in, finds a charge sheet and asks what they're being brought in for. Paul suggests Drunk and Disorderly conduct.

All of a sudden Brown leaps from the bench, at the station sergeant. (Why I do not know). He is thrashing and flailing, kicking and scratching. He is felled onto the desk and the five or six officers in the charge room rush to hold him. Hearing the fracas, other officers rush in from the front office to lend a hand. They join the melee despite the five officers all ready holding him. The man is still thrashing violently. John has an arm a long way behind his back, other officers have each of his legs and his middle. He is pinned to the table. Paul is holding his face and, with the palm of his hand, hitting the side of his jaw. "Let's get him in a cell". Someone rushes and opens the cell door. Brown is picked up and carried by the officers to the cell and thrown in. The door is hurriedly slammed shut. The other man, Blondie, has started to go beserk. (I have missed this because I am watching the other scene.) Several officers are restraining him. He is screaming and shouting. He is surrounded, picked up and thrown into another cell, Paul and Mark follow him in, six or seven officers around the door. There are the sounds of a beating screaming and swearing emanate from the cell.

The other prisoner has started to thump his cell
door. The cacophony of screams, blows, swearing and pounding is electrifying.

The other officers are trying to get into Blondie's cell but keep pulling back. The inspector is at the door. "Paul", he orders sharply, "Take it easy!" The sounds of the beating go on. "Paul!, take it easy", he commands again. Mark drags Paul out of the cell. The door is slammed shut. Mark's shirt and hands are covered in blood.

From inside the cell the screams are getting louder. They are ignored as the ten or so officers in the charge room try and recover their composure. The inspector turns to Paul, "This is going down as more than a D.D."

The screams from inside the cell continue more hysterically and violently. "Oh fuck, we haven't trapped his fingers under the cell door," suggests Mark. There is laughter at the prospect, born of tension rather than humour. "We can't open the door". The inspector and six or so PCs wonder what to do. The screaming is becoming more and more piercing. The inspector says that he is not prepared to have the door opened. "He's having us on", somebody suggests. Nobody is convinced. The screams are too loud and too painful.

Gail suggests using a ruler under the door to see if anything is trapped. The idea is accepted and she fetches a ruler from the front office. Mark slides it along the crack, anxiously watched by the surrounding PCs. "Something's under there but it's not his fingers." The officers debate whether and how to open the door. Eventually the inspector agrees to the riot shields being used to protect the officers when they open the door. Paul and Roger volunteer that they are shield trained, and they fetch them from the finger print room. The shields are placed in front of the cell door. Six men stand behind the flat of the door on the hinge side, ready to slam the door shut if need be.
The door is opened. Paul has the riot shield pressed against the widening crack. He pushes the man further in and the door is hurriedly slammed shut. Apparently it was the man's clothing trapped under the door.

A doctor, who had been called out to an earlier incident and was in the charge room when the fracas broke out, re-entered after a tactful withdrawal. The inspector has a word with him, indicating that the man is probably going to need treatment. The doctor agrees to wait around.

John comes in to the charge room and points at the plastic bag he is carrying - somewhere in the middle of the goings on he managed to radio Dick to pick up the Chinese take-away before closing time at 1.30am. In the canteen there are more officers than will fit round one table, so John, giving substance to the communality of the night's events, pulls up another, making room for ten. The Chinese is put on the table and we start to divide it up. Slim, me, Dick and John, Sarah and Jan are also round the table.

Someone starts to recount the night's events to Dick and Jan who missed it all. Mark walks in, his shirt still covered in blood. "Fucking Hell, I want words with that Smith (Paul). That was over the top!" He slumps down angrily in the chair.

Paul walks in. Mark follows him with his eyes for a moment. "Can't you keep your fucking temper.....Didn't you hear the Guv'nor calling you off." Paul laughs it off. Everyone gets on with eating, more stories are swapped and the night's events are turned into amusement.

About twenty minutes pass and then Paul and Mark are ordered down stairs by the guv'nor. When they come back they are clutching some report books. Slim starts to sing the theme tune of "Jackanory", (a popular
children's television programme). He is told to shut up. John, Paul and Mark go off with their reports to the collator's office so they can get their story straight in peace and quiet.

LATER: Back in the canteen, Dick, Mark, Dave, Ed, and John are sitting down drinking tea. The phone rings. Paul and Mark are ordered downstairs again. When they come back, it appears that the doctor has seen the prisoners. One has a "suspected fractured jaw" the other "suspected broken ribs". They are to be taken down to the hospital. It appears that the guv'nor wants a better story to cover themselves. Mindful of my presence, John and Mark go outside. They come back in and everyone attentively waits for the conclusion. Someone is going to have bear the evidence of an "Assault on an Officer". Paul and Mark are the candidates. The problem is which of them shall it be. Paul says it should be him, but fair play dictates that they toss for it. Mark loses. John, Mark, Paul and Ed go outside again. There is the sound of scuffling and laughter. They re-enter, Mark "bottled out". John and Ed are laughing, "You'd have jumped on his fucking head". Ed gives a wicked smile, "That's right".

"I'll do it if you don't want to volunteer," Paul again. "No" — Mark is adamant. "But look," he says playing to the gallery in an exaggerated hero role, "I've just bought my house. I'm already going into hospital next week, and I don't want to land there tonight. What would my wife say!"

Later, Mark has been hit below the eye, a bruise is starting to come out.

Informal work norms, then, also extend to the use of force. As
was clear from the example above to the officers involved, the level of force used to quell the beserk man, involving seven or eight officers and, at the border lines between reasonable and unreasonable force, was not questioned. The man was beserk and had to be contained. Until he was, almost any amount of force was judged necessary. However, Paul continued to apply force and issued a beating even when the man was safely imprisoned in a cell, and it was at this point that criticisms started to be raised about his conduct.

I do not want to argue about whether the use of force was excessive in this example. What is important is that the officers involved thought that the level of force that Paul used was "over the top" and that it necessitated a cover-up. Although the officers involved were critical of Paul, (the inspector had called him off and Mark had directly challenged him), they were all prepared to involve themselves in an elaborate cover-up, thus preventing awkward questions being raised about the extent of the injuries to the suspect if a complaint should be made against Paul or, in the event of it going to court, that a barrister should allege brutality.

The reciprocity and solidarity among officers has its price. If formal sanction is to be avoided then officers are expected to conform to informal work norms. Thus it is expected that easing behaviour will not become skiving (Cain, 1971). When the work load is light it is quite acceptable for someone to sneak off to a quiet tea hole or kip in the back of the van. When it is busy, everyone is expected to lend a hand. Consider the following extract drawn from my field notes two days later involving the same group of officers:

As we were driving back to the station, we passed Dick who was parked up in front of the Chinese Take-away, eliciting the comment from Jan, "First the liquids and then the solids." (Dick had been drinking in one of the
local pubs while he was supposed to be on duty.)

Later in the canteen Dick sat quietly eating his take away. Mark came in and sat down. There was no conversation. Gavin was filling in the log book, occasionally checking with Russell about the sequence of the night's events. Suddenly the quiet of the canteen was broken by Mark, "You make me sick Dick. What do you think that you're doing....don't get me wrong I don't mind, it's just that we're doing all the work".
"What work?" taunted Dick indifferently.
"Take a look at the fucking message pad."
"What's wrong? It's not as if I'm fucking pissed."
"Is it fucking right!" Mark was starting to lose his cool and get more irritated at Dick's complete indifference.
"No it's not. I'm wrong and you're right. OK?"
"No it's not OK!"
"Go off sick Mark - Something is eating you."
"Fucking hell! I called you up didn't I and told you that I was going out with the Guv'nor. What more do you want?"
[Mark was alluding to the fact that he had arranged to meet Dick for a drink but got collared by the inspector to patrol with him]. To warn Dick that the Guv'nor was out and about he had radioed him under a pretext and surreptitiously dropped the information into the conversation.
"Yeah Yeah" replied Dick "Thanks a lot, what do you want me to do? Lick your arse!"
Mark walked out angrily. Gavin and Jan were obviously in sympathy with Mark's stated position. However, they were a little cynical as to his motives. As Jan said, "Yeah, but tomorrow night it'll be Mark."
A few minutes later Paul entered the canteen and sat down
looking very glum. He slumped into the chair. Nobody said anything but everyone was wondering what was wrong. "He's had a Polac hasn't he?", Dick broke the silence with almost sardonic pleasure.

Dick told us what had happened. Paul caught the Panda coming into the station yard leaving a gash down the back wing. (This was Paul's second Polac in a week).

Paul left the canteen.

A few minutes later Dick radioed down to him indicating that he would come and help sort out the mess. The result was that they "tippexed" out the scratch (which was very obvious, the brightness of the correcting fluid showing out against the off white of the Panda). They were hoping it would go unnoticed until much later when another relief had come on (and with luck two or three), by which time it would be much harder to trace the culprit.

Jan commented about this to Gavin later. "If he gets stuck on he's not going to be driving for a very long time.....but what does he expect when he goes chasing around these streets....He's always on at Susan for driving so slowly but she's never had a Polac....It's so obvious (the cover up). It's not fair. The driver on the other relief might get stuck on too if he doesn't notice it....He's another 123." (an allusion to another officer on the relief who has been barred from driving).

Paul was the butt of criticism for his driving skills a few days later and for the realisation that he was prepared to put another officer in jeopardy due to his own misjudgement. However, what all these examples serve to illustrate is how the integrity of the relief, despite internal disagreements, has loyalty as a primary factor and how informal pressure, rather than formal pressure, is brought to bear to ensure compliance to group norms.
These displays of solidarity not only affect the on-duty working relationships but off duty working relations also. For instance:

Malcolm had just got married and had caused some considerable offence by doing so without informing the relief. As this was discussed by those around the canteen table it was mentioned that John was also planning to get married. "You're not going to do a Malcolm on us are you and slip away for the weekend without telling anybody?" Someone else suggested that, "We should get Malcolm a card or something with everybody's name on it and perhaps a little something, not expensive though." The other PCs around the table were not so sure. As one stated bluntly, "He didn't tell us so why should we?" Eventually it was agreed that just a card would be in order, although they were still not happy that he hadn't told anybody."

Indeed the two other weddings of which I had knowledge, were very much police affairs. In one case, practically the entire relief had attended, leaving only a skeleton crew on duty to cover the Friday night shift. In fact, the inspector had worked from 2200 until 0200 and was then driving through the night to make the country venue of the wedding.

Ironically this display of solidarity could have a negative effect on officers' marital relationships. As one officer explained.

"There's a high divorce rate in this job because there is always the temptation to wander off the straight and narrow. There's always a piss up to be had at least once a week. It's difficult though because its necessary to go even if one's missus doesn't always approve. Getting drunk with the lads sort of bonds you together."
This bonding process cements elements of reciprocity and solidarity which provide a powerful resource for officers to draw upon in the face of the vicissitudes of both the organisation and environment. All officers face the same potential threat from the negative sanctioning power of the discipline code and physical harm from the public. Both are equally unpredictable. Since the discipline code is used arbitrarily by their line supervisors as a means to secure conformity to more valued ends, it makes a correct reading of supervisory intentions problematic. Not only do different sergeants vary in their demands, some are sticklers about paperwork, others about generating "good arrests", but the same sergeant can use all the infractions of discipline to which he normally turns a blind eye in an effort to secure compliance from a recalcitrant. Assessing the best way of managing the supervisory relationship is made even more difficult by the constant turn-over of sergeants and inspectors. How best to act in a given situation cannot be determined by an appeal to the written rule of the discipline code, it is always contingent.

In isolation the patrol officer has little scope to neutralise this power. Collectively, however, they do. The occupational culture mediates the tensions between autonomy and dependency. It provides a set of recipe rules which derive their utility from an alternative power base, the collective resources of the working group. As we have seen, to be able to draw on these resources requires conformity to other work group based norms, and thus the officer is equally open to sanctions applied by their working partners.

Isolation and Solidarity - Autonomy and Dependency

The consequences of isolation and solidarity, autonomy and dependency are not felt in isolation. They combine and inter-relate to create the unique occupational milieu that
patrol officer inhabits. This combination is most cogently revealed in the following extract. However, it does not arise from any activities that are a direct consequence of police work as such. There is no call to answer from the public, there is no request for back-up and it does not relate to any internal accommodations arising from doing the work. Rather, it concerns a situation which is constructed entirely by the officers for their own amusement, a spontaneous and complex practical joke. Like all jokes it is funny because it makes a play on the contradictions faced by the participants arising from the structural constraints they face in their everyday lives, in this case from their occupational position. Here we see officers at play. As with children at play, it reveals and serves to reflect the key saliences of the participants.

At about three-thirty we headed back to the station for tea. The canteen was littered with the debris of the night, dirty cups and plates strewn over the tables. I put the kettle on while Jock and Bill sorted out some paper work. The rest of the relief trickled in. A heavy boredom hung over in the air. So far it had been a very quiet Wednesday night, and it wasn't likely to liven up now. We had tea and at about 4am Viv and Leslie declared that it was time to go out again. A few minutes later Bill and Jock got up to go.

As we were walking across the station yard, the tranquility of the early morning was rent by a scream of "RUN!". Jock charged passed me. From behind a parked car Leslie and Viv proceeded to empty the entire contents of a water pistol and a squeezy bottle, filled with water, over Bill. Jock managed to get to the car but, before he was in, Leslie turned the water hose on him, soaking his back and legs. Leslie and Viv were in hysterics at the success of their attack. I managed to get into the back, and Bill in the front. Jock quickly locked the windows and the doors to prevent a further
soaking. After a few minutes of gloating over their wet colleagues, Viv and Leslie got into the van and left the station yard.

Bill and Jock were soon plotting their revenge. They armed themselves with Bill's water pistol which, as he told me, was stored in his locker for just such occasions, and another squeezy bottle. Then Bill headed out for the quiet early morning streets, excitedly awaiting revenge.

The opportunity came about twenty minutes later. Viv radioed back to the station to say he was going off division to get some petrol from the all night petrol station which was used when the divisional garage was shut. Bill sped through the deserted streets. Hopefully they would arrive at the petrol station a few minutes before the van, park up in a quiet side road, just in front of the garage, and sit in wait for their prey. Bill left the engine running to ensure a speedy ambush. The van came into view, Leslie got out to fill her up and Dave went in to buy some sweets.

"Now!" commanded Jock. The Panda lunged forward, across the road, and into the petrol station forecourt. Before Leslie had a chance to know what had hit him, the contents of the squeezy bottle had been emptied over his back. Jock managed to score a direct hit on Dave. "Mission accomplished", screamed Jock. "Let's get out of here". The Panda sped off into the night. "Fucking Magic, Yahoo", Bill declared. Jock, carried away with the euphoria of success, continued emptying the water pistol at the pigeons as the Panda chased away, shouting gleefully when he scored a hit.

A few minutes later, Bill caught sight of the crime car in his rear view mirror. It started to accelerate, close up and then over-take the Panda, the driver offering two fingers as he passed. Bill rose to the
challenge, accelerated and, for the next fifteen minutes, an eighty mile an hour chase ensued, involving the van, the two Pandas and the crime car. Then, without warning, but as if by design, there were no cars in sight. Bill cruised trying to locate the other units. "We're being set up," declared Jock, "I can feel it." We cruised for fifteen minutes, Bill and Jock, recounting the heroic deeds of the night.

Then it came. "Could C99 rendezvous with C38 at --". Jock accepted. "They must think we're fucking stupid." Bill headed slowly towards the location. As we neared, Jock checked that all the doors and windows were locked. We rounded the corner of a quiet, low rise, council development. The other Panda was in the middle of the road, bonnet up and, from underneath the engine, we could see two legs sticking out. "They've got to be joking", declared Jock, "They must think we're really stupid." Dave turned to me, "Whatever you do, don't open the door."

We edged forwards towards the Panda, and Bill stopped the car. Leslie came over from the Panda and pleaded with Bill to "give them a hand". Mick, secure in the locked Panda, smiled a smug smile and shook his head. Leslie pleaded some more. Bill just continued to smile and shake his head.

Suddenly from nowhere, the van screeched to a halt, blocking the Panda's exit, and the crime car positioned itself behind. Leslie ran for cover. Bill tried to reverse out, but the gap was too tight. Above, on the second floor balcony, Andy came into view. Without warning, a bin liner full of water came flying over the balcony. And then another. They both missed the Panda but, as they hit the ground, a huge shower of water engulfed the car. In the heat of the attack, Bill had managed to reverse the car out of the trap and was now heading towards the road junction. The crime car
followed, overtook and blocked the way. Bill mounted the
pavement and headed free.

The four cars were in pursuit now on one of the main
Kimberley through roads. The unmarked car overtook and
forced the Panda to a slow halt. The other Panda blocked
it from behind and the van to the side. Bill and Jock
were surrounded. Leslie, now out of the van, was
fiddling with some keys at the lock of the besieged
Panda. The door opened, Bill desperately tried to hold
it shut, but Viv yanked it open. Andy was ready with a
squeezy bottle and emptied it over Bill and Jock. Bill's
foot must have hit the accelerator as he tried to defend
himself. The car lurched forwards. CRUNCH!

There was silence. With no discussion the drivers
got back into their cars and parked them up neatly. They
then got out to inspect the damage. Luckily, the crime
car was unscathed. The Panda had not come off so well.
The front light was completely smashed. "Oh fuck"
somebody declared, and the company started to giggle
nervously at the predicament, the adrenaline and
excitment of the last hour still rushing.

It was nearly 5.20 am. They only had thirty minutes
until the next shift came on for briefing. This left
little time to prepare a cover up. "OK", declared Bill,
taking charge, "We'll meet back at the station in ten
minutes. Don't all arrive together though. I'll have a
story worked out by then." The cars split up. Bill and
Jock, still laughing prepared their story. "What time
was the last call?" Jock checked his communications log.
"Three-Ten". "OK, this is what we do. We say that we
were giving back-up, parked up and left the car
unattended. Someone must have come and kicked the
headlights in then, but we only just noticed it now."

When we arrived back at the station yard, the other
units were all in. A huddle formed and Bill repeated
them the story. Everyone agreed. As the huddle broke
up the sergeant appeared. (The inspector had gone off at
two and this, the only sergeant on that night, was a
temporary from the adjoining police station standing in
because they were so short. He was leaving early,
presumably having been relieved by the sergeant coming on
for the six o'clock shift). Bill approached the
Sergeant. Everyone nonchalantly got on with their
business, cleaning out the cars etc, pretending not to
listen. Bill repeated the story. The sergeant's face
started to strain with the signs of disbelief. Jock
tried to come to the rescue by offering corroboration of
the story but, before he could get very far, the sergeant
interrupted. "What do you take me for? I can hear the
radio you know". There was a brief silence. "OK Sarge,"
declared Bill, "It was my fault. We were pissing about
and I knocked it." The sergeant smiled, "OK, I'll square
it." And with that he went back into the station to file
a report. Bill gave a sigh of relief, as the ensemble
tried to decide where to go for an early morning drinking
session.

There are a number of features in this example which mirror the
skills and techniques that officers utilise in their day to day
role as police officers: driving fast, lying and bluffing,
evaluating the truthfulness of other people's claims. However,
it is the form, rather than the content of the incident which is
of most significance. This is pertinent in two ways.

First, the form of the practical joke is always that of
surprise, of something happening that was not expected, generally
something unpleasant. In the above situation the generally
held fear of being attacked by an unpredictable and violent
member of the public is played out using water as a safe
substitute. The consequences are different, a soaking rather
than a hiding, but the form reveals a structural identity. The
isolated patrol officer facing adversity from unknown and
unpredictable events.
Second, the specific practical joke that is played and replayed to its climax precisely resembles the structure of the "extortionate transaction", the escalating spiral of threat and counter-threat (Muir, 1977). When officers do become involved in extortionate transactions with the public they rarely lose. If they are in danger of so doing they can normally rely on back-up to ensure that they regain control. In the context of the practical joke, however, the extortionate transaction has no such limits. It is a police versus police event. Moreover, as the stakes get higher and higher, with each subsequent attack being more elaborately planned and executed, the symbolic winners and losers become merged into one. On one level, the game of attack and counter attack is merely being played out between the individual participants. On another level, all the participants are united on the same side which stands in opposition to the organisation and its attempts to control them. In short, they are celebrating their autonomy.

There is an almost inevitable logic to the crash that terminates the waterfights and therefore the extortionate transaction. The situation could have conceivably just fizzled out, but the personal stakes, the adrenaline flow and the excitement that had been built up in the cycle of revenge and counter revenge suggest that a resolution would have to be imposed rather than chosen. No one was in the process of backing down. The crash provided that imposed resolution, but it has greater significance than just the end of the extortionate transaction because it gave substance to that nebulous phenomenon, "group solidarity". At once, opposing sides in the game are united. The soakings evaporate into the more substantial concern of how to manage the cover up.

There was never any question that they must all accept the responsibility of covering up the crash. Although they could have left Bill to carry it individually, they were all guilty by association; it could have happened to any of the vehicles. The unfortunate timing of the incident, not long before shift changeover, and the obvious nature of the damage meant that
effecting makeshift repairs was impossible. The only possibility was to admit the accident but to cloud its circumstances. Bill's admission, however, rests on the rather optimistic, (and, in the event, unfounded) assumption that the sergeant can be hoodwinked when, quite clearly from having access to the radio communications, he cannot have failed to notice that something was going on. In the end, then, Bill had to admit to both the accident and its circumstances. Bill has now placed himself in the hands of the sergeant, and is completely dependent upon him to minimise the consequences. If the sergeant is so inclined, he can ensure that Mark is barred from driving, or he has the power to "square it". The celebration of autonomy has become a reminder of the dependency between the patrol officers and their superiors.

There is, then, not one joke but three. The first is the water fight which is a joke against each other. The second is encapsulated by the crash which is a joke against the organisation and the fragility of its attempts to control them. And the third, perhaps the funniest, is that they are not autonomous after all. They are dependent upon the sergeant and his mediating power within the organisational structure to "square it".

The patrol officer is caught within a web of contradictory and competing pressures. The autonomy which arises from the legal constitution of the office is tempered by the dependency on others, both peers and superiors. This dependency is made necessary due to the problem of having to cope with the threat of negative sanctions. The socially isolated position of the constable, both generally, because of the stigma attached to the office and, specifically, because of the manner in which patrol work is organised, leads to a strong sense of solidarity among officers. The occupational culture provides officers with a set of recipe rules which help mediate the various tensions. The rules are not binding, nor are they followed blindly, but they provide one, and often the most convincing and practically relevant, resource for avoiding trouble.
The preceding examination of the occupational milieu provides the backcloth for the way in which patrol work is achieved on the street. With this in mind, we move on to Part III which deals with the nature of the communications system; how officers conceive of the environment and how they manage and resolve the incidents with which they are called to deal.
PART III

PATROL WORK
Chapter 7

Communications

The capacity of the police organisation to control an area, its ability to regulate the work of the patrol officer, and its power to respond to calls from the public is greatly facilitated by the uses of its radio communications system. The radio enables the organisation to mobilise a fast and effective response in the case of large scale emergencies such as rioting or bombings. In a personal crisis, the radio can mobilise a unit for swift action; for example, to break down the door of a collapsed epileptic and arrange for them to be transported to hospital. Further, it enables patrol officers to be supervised more closely by their superiors and dispatched at the expediency of the communications officer.

The personal radio, which all officers and relief officers are expected to carry when out of the station on patrol, consists of a transmission unit and a send and receive microphone. The transmission unit is a heavy rectangular black box about one inch thick, eight inches long and two and a half inches wide, with a small rechargeable battery in its base. The send and receive microphone is attached to the transmission unit by a thick wire about two feet long. On its side is a small button which has to
be pressed to broadcast.

The design of the radio enables the transmission unit to be clipped around the back of a male officer's belt, so that, when he is walking, it hangs down unobtrusively by his side. Police women carry the transmission units in their handbags which are carried over their shoulders. The microphone is then attached to the lapels of the jacket.

Officers go to great lengths to ensure that their radios are broadcasting and receiving properly. At the beginning of each shift each officer goes to the cupboard in which the radios are stored and selects a radio, takes a battery from the the recharging cabinet, and signs them out. Although the recharging unit indicates whether the batteries have been sufficiently recharged, the equipment is unreliable and often gives a false indication. Officers therefore test their radios and batteries, before leaving the station, by blowing into the microphone while in ear shot of other PCs with radios and seeing if they are receiving them. Even when this procedure is followed the radio still sometimes malfunctions. If the officer is out of the station s/he will frequently make a special return trip to replace the battery. This is as much to protect him or herself against accusations that they were skiving as to ensure back-up can be summoned if necessary. It is the centrality of the radio to the officer's work world which leads many officers to talk about being, "married to their radios".

The radio serves to link the patrol officer to both the organisation and, less directly, to the outside events with which they have to deal. As a link to the organisation, the radio offers a degree of security against uncertainty. It can be used to ask for assistance, to elicit further information or to seek advice. On the other hand, as a link to the environment, the information that the radio brings actually serves to heighten uncertainty. As Manning (1983) makes clear, this is due to the complex nature of the encoding and decoding processes that take place as an incident passes through the police communications system. Since the patrol officer stands at the end of this
complex process, it has already undergone a transformation from raw data (the original message from the public) to a highly refined police shorthand e.g., assault in progress.

In simple terms there are three distinct stages that occur before an event in the environment becomes the basis of a reactive police response. First, an event occurs which somebody deems as warranting police attention and they call the police. Second, information about the event is processed through the various segments of the communications system. Finally, if the processing has resulted in the decision to mobilise an immediate police response, a call is put out.

The patrol officer is aware that the relationship between the message and the original incident is problematic and that it can only be understood in reference to particularistic organisational and occupational knowledge which acts as a cipher to unpack its meaning. As Manning writes:

In other words, the police connect or draw pragmatic interpretative connections between signs representing the incidents heard or seen and the event. They generalise, regardless of their position in the police communications system, that events are problematic; that communication of events is on the basis of the perceptions and interests of the caller; that received incidents are abstracted and coded by civilians (at two levels by the caller and by the operators...); that incidents are passed on by decision processes that they may not understand (for example, the ways in which operators, dispatchers and controllers queue and send incidents for attention); and that incidents are changeable (temporally, spatially and interpersonally) and uncertain (in appearance, in sequence or in order, in frequency of consequences and in context.) (Manning, 1983: 187).

The central focus of this chapter is the manner in which the technological organisation of the communications system affects
the pattern of work load distribution and the way that the
dividual patrol officer translates information into the basis
for action. In general, although there are exceptions (Manning,
1979a & 1983; Rubinstien, 1973), the literature has focused on
the organisational aspects of information processing (Manning,
1984, 1983; Eckblam & Heal 1982 ) or on the limitations of
information received from the public as a basis for police action
(Kelling, 1974; Bercal, 1971; Bieck & Kessler, 1977). The
predominate frame of reference, then, has been that of the
managerial problem of resource allocation. The police
organisation has been viewed as a supplier of a scarce resource
(law and order), due to demand from the public. The police,
therefore, are seen on the supply side of the equation. From the
patrol officer's position, however, it is more useful to turn the
model on its head and conceive of them on the demand side. This
would be far less of an issue if it were not for the method of
allocation adopted by the station based communications officer.
Rather than calls being assigned to particular officers, more
often than not they are put out to tender. The first unit to
accept the call is assigned to it, although other units may offer
back-up or attend without permission.

I want to argue that, rather than conceiving of the police
organisation as demand led, from the street officer's position
there is a shortage of "good calls". In the same way that
classical economic theory tells us that when demand outstrips
supply, competition results and the value of the goods increases,
for patrol officers, scarcity of 'good' calls leads to
competition and increases their value. For the patrol officer,
the scarce resource happens to be incidents. Further, like most
consumers, they are discerning about the quality of the incidents
supplied. Not all incidents have the same value, nor do
incidents have any intrinsic value. Value is constructed through
a particular occupational and organisational reading of the
police mandate, laid down in the formal organisational goals.
From the organisational perspective, the classic problem of resource allocation and work load distribution is solved by a laissez faire approach to deployment. In practice, this allows the problem of the intensity and speed of reaction to a call to be determined by the aggregate effect of individual decision making. From the officer's perspective, it leads to competition for the "best" calls and strategies to minimise dealing with the least favourable. To understand how this process is worked out in practice it is necessary to focus our attention on four, theoretically distinct, but practically inter-related areas.

1) The organisation and technology of patrolling.

2) The patrol officer's conception of the nature and importance of different types of work.

3) The situated interpretation of the message.

4) The manipulation of the technology and communications system in line with officers' conception of their task.

The Organisation and Technology of Patrolling.

The organisation of uniformed patrol is detailed in chart 1. At the two extremes are the Home Beats and the IRUs. In Kimberley at least, the Home Beats have little involvement with the day to day pressures of reactive policing. Their work is largely uninfluenced by the technology of modern policing. At the other extreme lies the IRU. Like the Home Beats, the IRU is protected from the pressure of everyday reactive work. They are on permanent standby for deployment during civil disorder and major incidents. They are linked to both the divisional and force wide communications system giving them a wide geographical area to cover, and they are equipped with a 20 seater van, riot
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPLOYMENT CHART</th>
<th>UNIT RESPONSIBILITY</th>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
<th>GEOGRAPHIC AREA</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZATION</td>
<td>INSPECTION</td>
<td>OPERATIONS</td>
<td>SPECIAL PRIORITIES</td>
<td>OPERATIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>DISTRICT</td>
<td>OPERATIONS</td>
<td>DISTRICT</td>
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<td>DISTRICT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>OPERATIONS</td>
<td>DISTRICT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Station**: Meet from station to accept calls from NYS, NYS, or NYS staff. Report to PR, operate, and control of NYG. Can return to meet from station to accept calls under the PR, operate, and control of NYG.
- **Division**: Meet from division to accept calls from NYS, NYS, or NYS staff. Report to PR, operate, and control of NYG. Can return to meet from division to accept calls under the PR, operate, and control of NYG.
- **Sub-Division**: Meet from sub-division to accept calls from NYS, NYS, or NYS staff. Report to PR, operate, and control of NYG. Can return to meet from sub-division to accept calls under the PR, operate, and control of NYG.
- **Resident**: Meet from resident to accept calls from NYS, NYS, or NYS staff. Report to PR, operate, and control of NYG. Can return to meet from resident to accept calls under the PR, operate, and control of NYG.
- **Deployment**: Meet from deployment to accept calls from NYS, NYS, or NYS staff. Report to PR, operate, and control of NYG. Can return to meet from deployment to accept calls under the PR, operate, and control of NYG.
- **Communication**: Meet from communication to accept calls from NYS, NYS, or NYS staff. Report to PR, operate, and control of NYG. Can return to meet from communication to accept calls under the PR, operate, and control of NYG.
helmets, shields, and batons.

In between these functions there lies the relief which, as the chart illustrates, contains elements which approach both of these extremes. In spite of the aims of neighbourhood policing to create a more proactive relief, it is primarily a reactive unit. The exigencies of the shift system, training, sick leave, the floating rest day, aid commitment, over-time restrictions, and so on, particularly during the miners' strike and Libyan Embassy siege, mean that a nominal relief strength of forty officers is whittled down to an average of 12-15 officers per shift. Under these conditions, priority is given to the reactive capability of the relief. In practice, this means that the area car, van, and Pandas are all crewed, whilst the station office personnel must also be deployed, to act as communications officer, VDU operator, gaoler and 'man' the front desk. Only if anybody is left over will foot patrols be deployed. Even then, the foot patrols are most likely to be selected to cover for the station personnel during meal breaks etc.

It is the communications system which links the officer to both the organisation and events in the external world. As can be seen from the chart, formally at least, the foot and Panda patrols are under the supervision of the station communications officer and are limited in their mobility. Walkers cannot easily react to events occurring more than a few hundred yards away, and the Panda is neither fitted with sirens nor lights, making fast response dangerous, even if it is invariably attempted.

The area car, on the other hand, is equipped to be the first line of emergency response. It is a powerful 3.2 litre Rover, capable of high speed, and is equipped with sirens and lights. The area car crew is linked by a mainset radio to the incident room at New Scotland Yard and receives, and is expected to answer, all the 999 calls on the division and to provide back up to area cars in other divisions. The area car is always double crewed, with a driver and an operator. The operator is responsible for using the mainset, and this also facilitates a fast response, as the functions of driving and handling the
communications system are split. As well as the mains, the crew carry personal radios which link them to the station. However, they are not obliged to respond to calls deriving from the station communications officer and could legitimately refuse. In practice, if it is busy and the area car is uncommitted, they will often take calls.

The van is in a slightly different position to the area car although it can pick up both sets of calls. It is controlled from the station and it is not protected from performing duties assigned to it from the station communications officer. However, it may legitimately be deployed from NSY if the area car is busy, or offer back up to emergency calls.

Levels of reactive demands and working patterns

Of course, patrol officers have many duties other than attending to calls from the public. There are reports to be written and filed, prisoners to be dealt with, court warnings to be delivered, enquiries to be made about matters outstanding, and so on. To try and gain an understanding of the levels of demand and the various activities that fall under the purview of the relief, I am going to make use of various internally produced studies and reports on deployment and resources in Kimberley. They must be treated with some caution since they were produced to address slightly different questions to the one posed here. However, they do provide a useful indication as to the level of reactive demand, and how officers' time is spent.

In Kimberley there is an average theoretical relief strength of 22 constables per relief who are supervised by two sergeants and one inspector. However, various abstractions due to sickness, aid commitments, annual leave, officers temporarily posted to the Instant Response Units or Administrative units, there is, on average, only 45% of the theoretical relief strength available at any one time. This means that, of the original twenty-two officers, on average only eleven will be available for deployment. Of these, one will be deployed as the communications
officer and another as the assistant station officer (ASO), leaving nine officers from the theoretical strength for deployment.

Usually four vehicles will be put out: the area car which is always double crewed, two Pandas and the van. These are generally single crewed during the early turn and the first half of late turn and double crewed for the second half of lates and all of nights. Those not allocated to a vehicle will be posted walking.

Table 1

Tasks of Relief Constables by the Percentage of Time Spent on Activity between the hours of 07.30 & 21.30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>% by shift</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Inside Station Duties</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refreshments</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Enforcement &amp; Social Service Work</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random Patrol</td>
<td>09.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Writing</td>
<td>09.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court</td>
<td>03.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with Prisoners</td>
<td>03.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief ASO</td>
<td>03.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enquiries</td>
<td>02.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigned Journey</td>
<td>01.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned Journey</td>
<td>01.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To gain an indication of how officers who are actually available on relief spend their time it will be useful to examine the results of a "slice of time" study produced by the station. (See Table One above). Forty "moments" of time were selected over a seven day period and all relief officers'
activity at that time was recorded. Since the study was aimed at assessing the possibility of increasing the amount of patrol officers' contact with the public it excluded a ten hour period at night and so the sample is only drawn from the hours of 07.30 to 21.30. However, it still provides a useful guide to early and late turn.

For relief officers as a whole, we can see that 56% of time available is spent in the station, and 44% outside of it. If we do not include attending court in outside duties, since it's not related to patrolling, we can see that only 40.5% of the relief strength is available to respond to calls from the public.

Looking at how this time outside the station is spent gives a rough approximation of what officers do when they are out on patrol. Thus:

Table 2
Percentage of time spent on various activities by officers on patrol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of activity</th>
<th>% time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Law Enforcement and Social Service</td>
<td>41.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random patrol</td>
<td>48.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enquiries</td>
<td>05.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigned Journey</td>
<td>03.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned Journey</td>
<td>02.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly sixty percent of officers' time is spent on activities other than responding to calls from the public. In fact, much of it is spent aimlessly wandering around waiting for the next call to come out. By examining only the amount of work
generated by calls from the public, it is possible to indicate the average amount of time officers spend dealing with reactive incidents.

An analysis of calls that demanded a response from the reactive capability of the relief was undertaken by the station in 1983. Two samples were drawn from different seven day periods. I have combined the two. The results are presented in the table below.

**Table three**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shift</th>
<th>No.of Messages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Turn</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Turn</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night turn</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is necessary to consider this information in the light of the capacity of the organisation to respond. The data in Table 3 excludes 999 calls and, therefore, it would be unreasonable to include the area car in the analysis. Apart from the area car, then, my observations suggest that, in general, the level of deployment would consist of three mobile patrols and between one and three walking patrols per shift, the tendency being for more walking patrols on late turn. Taking an estimate of four reactive patrols per shift (three mobile and one walking) on early and night turn, the units, on average, deal with just over three reactive demands each. Accounting for refreshment time of one hour per shift, this means one incident every two hours. For late turn, the number of reactive demands per officer is just under six, or one incident every one hour and
ten minutes.

Of course, such bland statistics hide as much as they reveal. It is in the nature of police work that the level of public demand for service is unpredictable. One indication of this unpredictability is how varied the demand on Kimberley police officers can be. This has importance beyond the immediate argument because police managers often argue that they must have a sufficient reactive cover to allow for wild fluctuations in public demand.

From the seven day samples, it is possible to compute the average of the highest combined totals for the same day of the week across each shift. The result is documented in table 4.

Table Four

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shift</th>
<th>Highest</th>
<th>Lowest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Turn</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Turn</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night Duty</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accounting for refreshment time and an average of four reactive patrols per shift, the highest level of demand per patrol, for early turn, is four incidents per shift, or one every hour and forty five minutes. For late turn it is seven and a half incidents per shift, that is just over one every hour. For Night turn it is just over four incidents per shift or one every hour and forty minutes.

At the lowest level of public demand, the number of incidents per patrol, for early turn and night shift, is just over two, or one incident every three and a half hours. For late turn it is just under four, or one incident every hour and forty five minutes.

It is important to place the demand for reactive reponse in
the context of the patrol officer's work day. As we have seen, patrol officers are expected to perform a myriad of tasks in between responding to calls. Consider the following "log" of the activity of the Panda car during a late turn:

Table 5

Sample Operational Log of Panda Patrol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14.00 - 14.10</td>
<td>Briefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.10 - 14.30</td>
<td>Transport PC to hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.30 - 14.40</td>
<td>Back to Police Station to deal with a front counter enquiry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.40 - 14.50</td>
<td>Dealing with enquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.50 - 15.10</td>
<td>Getting Petrol from divisional Garage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.11 - 15.25</td>
<td>Delivering Court Warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.26 - 16.00</td>
<td>Random Patrol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.01 - 16.30</td>
<td>* Dealing with Fail to Stop accident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.31 - 16.45</td>
<td>Delivering Message to DI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.46 - 17.00</td>
<td># Tail and stop speeding motorist, warned and asked to produce documents at station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.01 - 17.05</td>
<td>Pick up 3 Court Warnings from station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.06 - 17.25</td>
<td>Attempt to deliver two of the court warnings: both out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.26 - 17.35</td>
<td>@ Providing Back up to disturbance call being dealt with by area car. Called off before we arrived.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.36 - 17.50</td>
<td>* Dispatched to attend burglary, no reply at address.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.51 - 18.00</td>
<td>Deliver the other court warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.00 - 18.05</td>
<td>Drive Back to Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.06 - 19.00</td>
<td>Meal Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.01 - 19.30</td>
<td>* Attend PI accident (with patrol sergeant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.31 - 19.45</td>
<td>Go to station, pick up officer, transport PC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to hospital.

19.46 - 19.55  # Tail and stop suspect car. All in order.
19.56 - 20.00  Random patrol
20.01 - 20.05  * Youths starting machinery - No trace
20.06 - 20.15  @ Back up to Area Car. Fight. 4 officers on scene already. Stay in car
20.16 - 20.20  Random patrol
20.21 - 20.25  # Stop cyclist for going wrong way down a one way street. Informal warning
20.26 - 20.45  Random Patrol
20.46 - 20.55  Deliver message
20.56 - 21.05  Random patrol
21.06 - 21.20  @ Back up to Fail to Stop chase. Four officers already on scene. Stay in car.
21.21 - 21.35  @ Back up to area car: Post office insecure, suspects on premises. Area car already dealing on arrival. No trace of suspect
21.36 - 21.45  Transport Sergeant back to station
21.46 - 21.55  Random patrol then back to station.

Key
   * Reactive response at direction of communications officer
   # Self initiated activity
   @ Back-up: official and unofficial.

(N.B. The data for this log was gathered while I was accompanying a single crewed Panda. The driver asked me to act as operator and write down all the calls. This was the only occasion that I wrote anything in the field. I kept the piece of paper.)

It is apparent from the above log that, although the officer is assigned to four calls in response to demands from the public, these constitute only a small proportion of the officer's work load. While reactive policing has the highest priority and will override prior claims to the officer's time, it certainly does
not predominate. However, from the officer's point of view, this underestimates the amount of reactive policing he engaged in, since he provided back up, both officially and unofficially to another four incidents, although on only one occasion did this require him to leave his vehicle.

It is clear that, for much of the time, although there may not be a shortage of work, there is a shortage of incidents to react to. Moreover, it is generally these reactive incidents, which provide police officers with the "good calls" that lead to valued arrests. The consequences of this are two fold; not only are good calls competed for but also posted to the units that are most likely to receive them. The effect of the distribution of technology and the split level communication system is to make certain deployments more favourable than others. Probationers, particularly, seek out postings to cars which they realise will give them more opportunity to deal with crime related incidents. But as probationers are not eligible to enter for the standard driving course until they have two years service, they are dependent upon sponsorship from their sergeants and inspectors to give them postings as "observer" in the area car, or to act as second on one of the Pandas. There is keen competition for such posts and some friction if officers feel that they are being passed over unfairly. For instance:

Round the table Mark is winding up Howard for being in "the inspectors good books" and being part of the "Golden Four". "They can't do anything wrong," sneers Mark, "when anything comes up they get it...Howard's been posted to the crime car six times in the last four months." Howard appeals to the audience "Don't listen to him he's just got a chip on his shoulder."

This competition is not just restricted to deployments but extends to the selection for driving courses, since becoming a qualified police driver enhances the possibility of engaging in "real police work". Officers avidly await news of their
impending course. For example:

"Pam had told me earlier how she was hoping to get on a driving course soon. Her application had been submitted and supported by the inspector. The inspector walked into the Front Office, saw Pam, and asked if she wanted to do a course at the end of the month. Pam's face lit up. "Right I'll put you down for the sexual offences course." Pam's face dropped and, as she told me later, she had presumed that he was asking about her driving course and was very disappointed.

Other courses and specialist deployments can also be used to minimise the possibility of having to deal with "rubbish". One officer informed me that he wanted to become a dog handler because "I want to fight crime". Or, as the following conversation illustrates, CID and Crime Squad work is also seen as a route to avoid certain types of work:

Two officers from the Crime Squad had arrived at the scene of a domestic dispute which had required several units of back up. They mainly seemed to be there to watch rather than offer any practical assistance. As the incident was dragging on, one of the officers turned to his partner, "We might as well fuck off now". "Yes." replied his colleague, "That's what I miss, being on the Crime Squad, all the rubbish!" With that they left.

From the relief officers' perspective, gaining the formal skills of driving and the informal practice of keeping on the right side of their sergeants and inspectors enables them to maximise the quality and quantity of their encounters with the public. From this point of view it is clear that the area car is the choicest deployment. However, the supply of officers eligible to take the advanced driving course and, therefore, be entitled to drive the area car is restricted to those who have
taken the standard driving course and, although there is no fixed minimum, generally have at least six years' experience.

Bearing these constraints in mind, the formal organisation of deployment and the communications system is an important starting point for the analysis of the distribution and allocation of work. To gain a more rounded analysis, it is necessary to focus on the shared understandings that give meaning to the various functions and place on them differential values.

The Patrol Officer's Conception Of the Nature and Importance of Different Types of Work

There are two primary factors which influence the method of call allocation from the station. First, as a collective unit, once the police organisation has committed itself to a response, it is more concerned that the incident is dealt with at all than who, in particular, deals with it. As long as the necessary paperwork connected with it is filed, and the incident is neatly terminated on paper, at least, there will be no organisational come back. Second, the station based communications officer is not a fixed assignment, the responsibility is spread across most of the members of the relief. A flexible rota system ensures that an officer does not get "stuck inside" too often. The CO is therefore a fully integrated member of the relief who is expected to share the same norms and values and will be brought under informal pressure if he or she does not. The CO is aware that officers who are officially available for dispatch, may be "tied up" with another incident, involved in self-initiated work, riding in the back of the van when they should be walking, skiving, or unable to receive a message because of the transmission breaking up, a faulty radio, and so on.

The combination of these two factors means that, in general, calls are not assigned to individual officers. Messages are put out to tender, and the first unit or officer to answer the call is allocated to it and, perhaps, a second unit detailed as back
up. While not all calls generate the same response, it would be
difficult to discern which would be the most sought after calls
from a literal reading of the messages. The patrol officer has
to reinterpret the message in the light of an organisational and
occupational understanding of the meaning of work. For
instance:

At about 3.30 a call came over the radio, "Can any unit
go to 199 Old Mansion Street." There was no answer.
After waiting about twenty seconds or so, Nigel accepted
the call. "I'll make my way there, if you give me the
details when I arrive. With no haste we walked towards
Old Mansion Street. This is going to be a rubbish
call..... you can tell because they don't let you know
what it is about until you've accepted it."

When we arrived some three minutes later, Nigel radioed
back to the station. "I'm outside. Can you give me the
details". The operator explained that Mrs. Brown was
complaining that her neighbour had been throwing dead
pigeons on her roof. "I think she's a bit of a Nutter",
the dispatcher ended with.

In the above example, the officer is unpacking the meaning of the
call by reference to the form that the message takes rather than
its content and, at the same time, by his hesitation revealing
his priorities, hoping that someone else might accept it. As the
call relates to his beat he can only delay his response, or
questions may be asked about why he did not answer. Contrast
this with the following example:

As we were getting back into the car a call came over,
"suspect trying doors on -------------- Road". We are
only four hundred yards away from the incident. Chris
does not bother to answer the call but starts the car up
and speeds off towards the scene. It took us several
minutes to arrive, we got stuck behind another car and Chris complained bitterly that the Pandas were not fitted with a siren or light. He therefore had to rely on the horn and headlights to indicate to the traffic that he was in a hurry, but he had to be much more circumspect than the area car in taking chances while over taking.

In the above example, the officer is not officially assigned to the call and he does not acknowledge receipt of the message. In fact, the area car is dealing with it and the station was relaying a message passed on to them from the operator). His almost instantaneous response is related to his and his colleagues' conception of the work, and to the value placed on such prime calls which offer the chance, albeit slim, of a crime arrest.

In this respect, the priorities of Kimberley officers are not very different from those documented by police researchers in other areas. (Manning, 1977; Holdaway, 1983; van Maanen, 1974). They are related to occupational and organisationally derived categories which stratify and prioritise the work in line with the perceived mandate of an organisation committed to crime fighting. In Kimberley there are four major conceptions of work:

"Work", which involves doing anything other than sitting around in the canteen drinking cups of tea, such as delivering court warnings providing transport for other officers etc.

"Shit Work / Rubbish", which is usually reserved for the social service aspects of policing, such as dispute settlement, attending noisy parties, dealing with drunks, letting people into their homes after they have locked themselves out, and so on. One of the reasons why this type of work has such a low status and is viewed so disparagingly is that there are few organisational rewards for dealing with it. It also remains hidden from view. For most of the time the only formal record
that an incident has been successfully terminated will be such catch phrases found on the message pad as 'Parties seen and advised. No further Action.' Success is deemed to be no call back. The other reason is that they are often the most difficult and dangerous to handle, involving people in highly charged emotional states.

"Process", refers to routine law enforcement, which could be typically dealt with without recourse to arrest, such as a road traffic offence or driving a defective vehicle. Process is particularly sought after by probationers as it is used by their sergeants to give a concrete indication that they are working.

"Real work", is ideally encapsulated by the ritual of chase and capture. It results in a "good arrest", for example, for mugging or burglary. "Real work", provides the concrete manifestation of officers' symbolic conception of their mission.

Such conceptions of work, coupled with the ability of the officer to manipulate the technology in line with their understanding of "real police work", has a direct effect on the level and type of service that police officers deliver to their publics. Some calls will receive a huge input of front line effort, mobilising all the vehicular patrols within seconds while others will be largely neglected and reluctantly dealt with by one unit. For instance;

Dave walked into the station office, dripping wet as it was pouring outside. The station officer asked him if he would go and deal with a 10/8 (accident without injury) down on the High Street. He didn't want to go since he'd just come back from dealing with another incident and wanted to do the paperwork on it so he could go and interview the victim in hospital before he went off duty. He tried to get a car to deal with the 10/8 but the Panda
was committed. Dave reluctantly accepted to go to the call. As we were leaving, the van driver came into the office and offered him a lift down to the High Street. Once in the van all the plans changed. Dave, who was trying to get to the hospital to take a statement, was to be dropped off there. The van would deal with the 10/8, pick up a prisoner from ----- Road and pick Dave up from the hospital on the way back. When we got to the scene of the accident there was no trace. Steve radioed back to the station to find if they had got the right location. They had, but the two drivers were now arguing it out in the station office.

Rather than just drive Dave to the hospital, Steve decided to go straight to ----- Road Police Station. Thus leaving Dave with no choice but to stay. Dave protested that he needed to get an accident statement from the woman in casualty, but Steve dismissed him with, "the process section can deal with it during the week."

While some types of work are devalued and avoided, other types are actively sought. Certain calls are guaranteed to produce a 'good turn out', although this is partially dependent upon the original source of the message. If a call is put out over the station radio, then all the patrols, foot, Panda, van, and area car can pick up the call. If it is broadcast over the mainset, then only the area car and van have access to it, and only if they decided to broadcast details over their personal radios will other units on the division be able to respond. A call involving 'real police work', such as 'suspects on premises' would almost certainly be broadcast over the station communication system by the area car and generate a fast and enthusiastic turn out. In line with this, it is possible to suggest a tentative hierarchy of calls, whose importance can be seen by the number of officers responding, both officially and unofficially, and the speed and urgency of the response:
Table 6

Selective hierarchy of most important calls

1) Officer in need of urgent assistance
2) Officer requests assistance/back up
3) Officer requests back up (Don't break your necks)
4) Suspects on premises/burglary in progress
5) Chase in progress
6) Assault/Robbery/Fight in progress
7) Disturbance/Dispute/Domestic Dispute
8) RTA Personal injury
9) RTA Damage only
10) Burglary (Cold)

The above table was generated by an analysis of the speed of the response to certain calls, i.e. whether officers travelled on the wrong side of the road, used horns and sirens, jumped red lights etc., and by the intensity of the response, i.e. how many units accepted the call, offered back up and how many units actually arrived on the scene. Even so, it cannot be read as an immutable listing since there are a host of factors which are weighed up in the decision to respond to each specific call. Unequivocally, officers will tell you that urgent assistance shouts are the most important to get to and that they will "break their necks" to get to them. Other calls are subject to a greater degree of situational reading. A "chase in progress" will usually generate a good turnout, both officially and unofficially. However, during the rush hour, many officers will not join them even if they are relatively close. The chance of getting there is slim and the risk of accident high. Conversely, at night or in the early mornings when the roads are clear, some officers are prepared to travel four or five miles at very high speed in the hope of a little excitement.
What is interesting about this prioritisation is that the top three categories do not refer to calls from the public but calls from other officers. As I have described earlier, the isolation of patrol work and the constant fear of "on the job" trouble creates strong bonds of solidarity between officers, and one of the most tangible forms is providing back-up and assistance. Officers are expected to, and do, risk their lives to help each other and members of the public, and the importance that the organisation attaches to this can be judged from the list of commendations found at the end of every Chief Constable's annual report. For example:

For courage, initiative and devotion to duty displayed whilst rescuing three people from a serious fire in which three people lost their lives. (CMND. 8928 p 85)

For courage and devotion to duty in effecting the arrest of a violent man armed with a machete. (CMND. 8928p 84)

For bravery in effecting the arrest of a violent man armed with a loaded shot gun whereby both officers sustained personal injury. (ibid)

The motivation for such "heroic deeds" cannot be instilled by any application of rule book stricture. It may be a disciplinary offence to fail to attend a call, but there are no rules governing when and where it is necessary to risk life and limb. These ultimately rest on the choices of individual officers. While officers are aware that danger is an inherent and unpredictable part of the job, their only real insurance policy is the response of their colleagues. The demand for such a response carries the reciprocal price of offering it in return. Under these conditions it is hardly surprising that back-up calls receive the highest priority. For instance:

A report of a chase and a request for back-up is
broadcast over the mainset. It appears to be heading towards Kimberley’s ground. The siren goes on. At full speed, we jump the red lights and, where necessary, drive on the wrong side of the road. Peter is listening intently to the radio and picking up the details of the location and relaying them to Tom. The chase is now being directed by a helicopter which we can hear circling above. As we approach nearer the scene the radio informs us that the suspects have abandoned their cars and are heading into an estate: "Believed armed, approach with extreme caution." Peter cracks that this will mean that every police car for miles around will be there..."Policemen love trying to get themselves shot...and playing at being heroes." As we speed round the corner onto the estate the radio blurts, "Assistance cancelled. Enough officers on scene". We slow down and head off back towards KH. There is a tension in the car, the adrenaline having been built up without an outlet.

When assistance or back up is requested it is assumed that officers will put themselves at risk to respond as quickly as possible. In the light of this knowledge officers will often add the proviso "don't break your necks" to alert their colleagues that although they require assistance, they are not in immediate danger. And although officers will drop whatever they are doing to attend an assistance "shout", they are highly critical if they think that the call was unnecessary:

A young officer asked for back up while trying unsuccessfully to break up a fight between two black youths looked on by a group of five black teenagers. As soon as the first car arrived, he cancelled the additional assistance. However, other cars had arrived on scene. The patrol sergeant emerged from one and surveyed the scene from the pavement. The officer now had complete control of the situation. The
sergeant turned to me, "I've got eight PCs here and a murder up the road. Stupid isn't it?" Just as he finished the sentence, the DSU came screeching around the corner. The doors flew open. Before the crew could scramble out, the sergeant indicated with his hands for them to stay put. They complied with his request.

The next day, two other probationers on the relief asked me what the assistance shout had been about. I explained and they seem very surprised that, having asked for assistance, the officer hadn't made an arrest, subtly intimating that it was an unnecessary "shout".

Situated Interpretations

As is evident from the sergeant's response, some calls are granted more legitimacy than others. However this does not just occur after the event, but before it. Even the least equivocal will be interpreted in the light of situated knowledge. This will include such factors as the officer putting out the call, the location of the incident, and the time of day, and they will all be used to judge the urgency of the request. For example:

As we were heading back to the lift, a crackle came over the radio. One of the area car drivers was putting out an 'all officers assist call'. Although I hadn't heard the message, I assumed what it was from Alistair's response. His finger did not even reach the lift button. He flew to the stairs and sprinted down the eight flights, his feet hardly touching the floor as he went. Alistair got to the car a good ten seconds before me and Steve and, as I tried to climb in the back, the seat jammed and I fumbled. "Get in!", commanded Alistair like a regimental Sergeant Major. I fumbled again. "Get in!", he ordered again and this time with more edge to
his voice. I yanked at the seat with all my might and shot into the back. As soon as we were on the road Alistair apologised for shouting at me but, he explained: "One of our men might be getting himself killed out there." As Alistair told me later, this was "not just any 'all officers assist' call but one from an officer of 17 years' experience who wouldn't put out a "shout" unless he was near to being killed."

This also appeared to be the interpretation of practically the entire division. Within six or seven minutes of the call being put out, there were nearly forty officers on the scene. Officers had run from the station which was about three hundred yards away; the adjoining divisional area car responded, as well as the unmarked crime car, the inspector's car, the two Pandas, the van, and the DSU.

This process of situated interpretation is not just limited to the answering of back-up calls, but is used to decide what priority should be given to responding to any call. This process is most easily understood from the area car for two reasons. First, because the area car is capable of receiving all the calls relating to the division, it has the widest choice available to it. Second, since the area car is permanently assigned an operator, the decision making process is more readily observable. Consider the following detailed account of how the communications system is used by an area car crew:

On every occasion a mainset call came out the operator listened intently. The first information that she wanted to hear was the location. This is not given by an address, but the district and divisional call sign. (Thus "K" is Kimberley's District, "KH" Kimberley police station's subdivision, "KN" and "KD" are the other divisional areas on the district.) These call signs were listened to intently, and the operator wrote down the
relevant details even when they were not answering the
call or providing back up. The call sign of the
adjoining districts ("N" Northtown, which has a long
arbitrary border to the North and "S" Southville which
borders to the South) were also listened to and, if the
incident was serious, details may have been noted.

Where the call sign was for one of the "K" divisions, the
operator would note the address and any other relevant
details such as the description of the suspects involved,
even though the driver would not necessarily accept the
call. If the call was for KH, the operator would accept
without hesitation and the driver would accelerate and
start to head towards it. However, if it was for one of
the other call signs on the division, the operator would
consult with the driver before accepting. This is done
often with no more than a gesture or a nod, or by
inference as the car starts to accelerate, reverse and
turn round to head towards the call.

A call to a dispute came over the mainset to an incident
on "KD's" ground. Pam wrote down the details and then
asked the driver if he wanted to accept it. "No", came
back the answer. "It's too trivial and too far."

Over the PR an "alarm call" is broadcast. We are a long
way from the scene but Kevin wants to accept it. Pam
informs the station. We speed there but without lights
or siren and without driving on the wrong side of the
road. When we arrive, the crime car is already on scene
and reports the premises secure.

A call comes over the mainset "K2, 12 year old
threatening other children with axe". Pam accepts
immediately as the car shifts gear. The siren and lights
go on. Pam broadcasts the message to the station. When
we arrive the van is already there.

The three examples above serve to illustrate the complexity of choice that is involved in making decisions about how to respond. In the second example, Kevin did not have to accept the call. It was issued from the station and no questions would have been raised if they had remained silent. Further, alarm calls are generally known to be false alarms. Indeed, in Surrey, where their call sign is 10\9, it is often quipped that this is because "nine times out of ten it is a false alarm". On the other hand the area car was at the time uncommitted and, to a degree, doing something is better than doing nothing. This is particularly the case with an alarm call because, if it is a false alarm, then, as soon as it is discovered that the premises are secure, the incident is over. There is no paperwork involved and there is little chance of "on-the-job" trouble arising from the incident. There is, however, the remote possibility that a burglary has occurred and, if the suspects are still on scene, the chance of a good arrest.

In the first example, again, the area car did not have to accept the call since it was for "KDs" ground. Although the operator thought that it was a legitimate call to respond to (otherwise she would not have asked) the driver, who has the ultimate decision, did not. A call to a disturbance can relate to a large variety of incidents. It is a catch all phrase behind which can be anything from kids messing about to a violent argument between husband and wife. As a rule any arrest that arises out of a disturbance call occurs due to the demeanour of the offenders rather than any specific infraction that may have resulted in the police being contacted. Disturbance calls rarely result in "real police work" and will be more likely to involve dealing with stroppy, and distraught people.

In the third example, the driver and the operator are in immediate accord. The call originates from the mainset, it is on their ground and it is indisputably the area car's responsibility to respond. However, it is understood that such calls are
unlikely to have a tangible result. The suspects may have fled the scene, the "axe" is possibly a toy, and the person who rang the police misinterpreted children at play for reality. On the other hand, the call may genuinely be as stated and the possibility of someone being injured high. In this case the speed of the response is crucial. Therefore, not only does the area car rush to the incident, it also broadcasts the details to the other units on the division. These units will not have picked up the call because they do not have a mainset, but they may be nearer and can therefore respond more quickly.

As I have already indicated, with the decision as to whether or not and how to respond to back-up calls, officers use particularistic and localised knowledge about officers, location, etc. to determine the voracity and urgency of calls. The sum of these individual decisions will partly determine the overall intensity of the response. This also applies to the decision as to whether or not to respond, officially and unofficially, to certain types of calls from the public. Locations within a vicinity have a reputation for trouble: certain houses are known to be the scene of violent domestic disputes; particularly warehouses and shops are known to be an easy target for the burglar; some clubs are known to have a rowdy clientele. Contrast the following extracts:

A call came over to attend a "domestic dispute" at 139 .... Road. The siren went on as the area car lurched forward. Paul, the operator, accepted the call. "He's going to kill her one of these days", frets the driver. We head at full speed on the wrong side of the road where necessary. The car pulls up and the officers jump out and rush up the steps.

11.30pm . A call came over to attend a domestic dispute. The operator accepts. "This is a tea and sympathy job, then?", he asks Sally. "Yeah", she replies and explains that she has been there before and the woman is "a bit of
a nutter". Although we proceed with normal speed there is no urgency in the response.

Messages, then, are not only unpacked and translated by reference to occupationally and organisationally derived conceptions of work, but with reference to specific situated knowledge. In the first example, the previous knowledge of the woman, her family and the history of beatings that her husband meted out, coupled with the fact that the man was probably drunk, (it was just after closing time) led to a very fast response to what is considered by many officers to be the lowest status kind of police work. The second example which, ostensibly, is an identical call is also read in the light of previous knowledge. Since the woman is "a nutter" and "tea and sympathy" is not part of "real police work" there is no need to hurry. Such typifications are often related to a police reading of the spatial and normative dimensions of the city's streets which combines to form a basis for interpreting behaviour and events in specific locales.

**Situated interpretations and the concept of place**

The backcloth for patrol work is the street. Even where officers are called to deal with incidents that occurred on private property such as break-ins, thefts etc., generally only the victim is present. Therefore, any chance of apprehending the offender will be as they flee from the scene. Policing, then, is essentially played out in public places and, while sometimes related to criminal law enforcement, as is the case with the fleeing house-breaker, it is more often concerned with order maintenance. This distinction between public and private space is an important feature in the determination of patrol practice (Strinchcombe, 1963) as the police are limited by both legal and normative standards of privacy. A deafeningly noisy party occurring in a private dwelling will be attended and a
request for the music to be turned down issued, but failure to comply will not result in arrest. Instead, civil proceedings will be brought by the environmental health officer. The same behaviour, and non-compliance, on the street, however, would almost undoubtedly result in arrest for disturbance of the peace etc. The importance of the distinction between public and private is well illustrated by David Powis' book, "The sign of a crime, a field manual for police" (Powis, 1977). Of its 15 chapters, 12 relate to the surveillance (and recognition) of possible suspects in public spaces by alerting officers to behavioural clues that can be used as indicators of persons with suspect motives. For instance, Powis exhorts his colleagues to watch for:

Any person who seems nervous of you especially one who avoids passing you on the foot way and crosses the road.

Persons loitering near motor vehicles in warm summer weather who are wearing leather gloves.

Men in vehicles watching you

The possibility that male and female loiterers in plain view may be look outs for other criminals currently at work.

Motor vehicles with trade plates in the evening or at night especially if there is more than one occupant in the vehicle.

Such typifications, taken together, have behavioural, spatial, stereotypical and temporal referents. However, they cannot be applied indiscriminantly since they are also dependent upon localised normative orders. What is typical of one area or street is not typical of another. For instance, consider the
following extract from my fieldnotes:

Any car that was parked hastily, looked old and battered, was partially stripped or just a plain old Cortina seemed liable to a check. Location was important. Particular estates had a reputation for dumping, those with large open garages were a favourite.

Although any car might be suspicious, suspicion increased with location, and previous situated knowledge of the local area is crucially important for the warranting of the decision to make a check.

Where an officer is new to an area, the first problem is one of orientation. On one level, this is merely a geographical issue. Responding to calls requires knowledge of routes across the ground, short cuts, one way systems, and often, in the inner city, at least, a mental map of large council estates so that individual blocks can be located without recourse to the, often vandalised and therefore indecipherable, estate maps. The first problem for the newcomer, then, is to try and decipher the geography of the area. For instance, Brian and Chris had both been transferred to the division within the previous six weeks, and had been deployed to the station van.

They both thought that it was odd that the inspector had put them together since neither of them knew the area. Consequently, much of the night was spent winding our way from one end of the division to the other, with both Brian and Chris trying to figure out where they were. As Brian put it, "It's fucking crazy putting us together. They should have put Karen with me, and John with you. (Both more experienced officers in Kimberley). If we get a call I probably won't have a clue where it is."

While geographical knowledge is important, the environment holds places which have a specific relevance for the patrol function
but are independent of geography: Places where tea can be obtained on a cold night shift, covered alleys and doorways which can be used to shelter from the rain, vantage points for observation work, clubs and pubs that have a reputation for trouble, badly signposted one way streets that are easy for the process hungry probationer to pick up a ticket to satisfy the demands of the relief sergeant. Thus, the geographical map is overlaid with a policing map which is predicated on situated, localised knowledge and provides a frame work for decisions about interventions and actions.

For instance, consider the following example drawn from a Friday night-shift. There are two officers involved, one, Max, although having fifteen years experience has only just moved into the area, and the other, Graham, has four years experience of policing in Kimberley. Max has heard talk of a "Party House", and wants to investigate it in the quiet of the early morning. (A Party House is usually an empty house that is taken over by young West Indians to provide all night parties. Music is normally provided and there is an admission price, beer is available by the can at inflated prices, and the police believe they are often the site of drug dealing.)

As we passed the house, a large detached building, a couple of West Indian youths came out carrying some beer crates to place them in the back of a car. Max wanted to stop and look at what was going on, but Graham was not very interested. Max stopped the van, however, and got out to question the youths. Graham followed unenthusiastically. "Can I look in your boot?" asked Max. The young West Indian man did not answer but said to an older man, "He wants to look in the boot." The older man opens it, it is full of beer.

"Tennants aye" Max said smiling.
"Yes", smiles the man back.
"You been having a party? Can I come?" asked Max.
"Sure", replies the man in a friendly tone.
"How often do you have them then?"
"You know", replied the man in a disbelieving voice. Graham has moved away from the boot of the car and is standing several yards back on some steps. He is smiling at Max's ignorance, but obviously does not want to get involved.

"I don't, I'm new to the area."

"You know", repeats the man, intimating that he thinks he is being wound up.

"No I don't", replied Max grinning.

"He knows", the man said, looking at Graham.

"Yeah I know", Graham replied with a bored intonation.

Max started to move away, not sure of his ground. As he got back into the van Graham explained about the "Party House" and how it operated.

To gain insight into this process of localised sensitivity it is useful to invoke Sacks' concept of the incongruity procedure:

Given that the police ply a route, they must, in order to use the incongruity procedure, learn to treat their beat as a territory of normal appearances. The learned normal appearances constitute a background of expectations in terms of which the beat is observed. Given these expectations, the patrol man must so sensitise himself as to be arousable by whatsoever slight variations appear which seem to be warrantable bases for making of the explanation of presented appearances a matter for investigation. (Sacks, 1978: 193)

The problem for the neophyte is that there is no yard stick against which such variations can be judged. Even where they are experienced officers like Max, the importation of one set of expectations from one area to another fails to take into account the differences between them. For Graham, there was nothing unusual or out of place in people emerging from a house in a
residential area at five in the morning. Max, on the other hand, was not sensitised to localised patterns of behaviour and such an event was worthy of intervention. Until the newcomer is familiar with the localised patterns of street life and the rhythms and patterns of an area, it is difficult for them to selectively filter the environment to decide what situations are worthy of intervention.

What is particularly significant about such localised knowledge is that, despite an organisational commitment to developing local intelligence units (cf: Cemal, 1985) using sophisticated computer based information systems (Hough 1980) there is no effective, formal, mechanism for inculcating the newcomer with situationally relevant knowledge. Admittedly, briefing sessions can be used to transmit key information, such as a known car operating in a particular area, or that a spate of burglaries has been reported on a specific estate. This information is, however, organisationally relevant rather than occupationally relevant and is concerned almost exclusively with crime control rather than the more vague problem of order maintenance.

Generally, occupationally relevant information about people and places is gained either through word of mouth or by direct experience. The oral tradition of story telling found in the police culture provides the vehicle through which particularistic knowledge can be transmitted. Most commentaries on police story-telling, especially Holdaway (1983), have focused on the symbolic aspect of story telling in maintaining and transmitting the core values of the occupational culture. Holdaway, for instance, stresses how the stories told by the lower ranks are often at the expense of their seniors, thus acting as a mediation device between the different levels of the organisational structure and strengthening the lower ranks' definition. While not substantially disagreeing with Holdaway, he does fail to recognise the distinction between the form and the content of the police narrative. Attention is almost exclusively at the level of formal analysis which disregards the fact that the content can
be of great situational relevance, particularly for the neophyte. The content often includes information about people, places, and events that is only of localised importance and non-transferable. The following extract from my fieldnotes is taken from Surrey and records a conversation between a probationer WPC of six weeks' service and an experienced WPC of five years. We are "sitting up" in the Panda by a roundabout avoiding the heavy traffic of the morning rush hour and waiting for a call.

Jane, the probationer, proffered to Sue that she was looking forward to getting herself into more difficult situations to see how she would handle them. Perhaps New Year's Eve would be a good night for that, she thought. Sue reacted strongly to this suggestion, saying that New Year's Eve was not fun, but used as an excuse by certain members of the public to wind the police up. She then related the following story:

One New Year's Eve there had been some trouble outside The .........., a local pub. Sue had been accompanying PC 'B'. They had three prisoners in the back of the Panda, which wasn't strictly allowed. Inspector "A" arrived on the scene and was standing around while the fracas continued. Rather than getting stuck in himself, he stood around chastising officers for not wearing their hats. Meanwhile, PC "B" had got into the car and was trying to calm the prisoners down. They really started to wind him up, shouting and swearing at him. Eventually PC "B" lost his cool and laid into one of the prisoners Sue had pulled him off and calmed him down. "What really got me", she said, "was that the inspector just stood around doing nothing and then gave the PC a bollocking. But you're going to lose your cool sometimes", she continued "you've got to take so much stick from the public, sometimes you just go over the top. You shouldn't but you do".
While this story is loaded with import about the occupational relevancies of the lower ranks, "You can't police by the book", "You can't trust senior officers", and so on, it also contains situationally specific information relating to a particular pub on the ground, to a named PC, and a named inspector, and about the behaviours of the public and of police officers. This situated knowledge is crucial for the patrol officer to perform effectively but, clearly, these concerns are not just those which are organisationally proscribed. The culture makes significant other features of the landscape which, although not organisationally salient, are occupationally relevant.

A beat is not just a configuration of streets but the scene of past incidents. It contains people who are friendly and unfriendly to the police, places where future incidents are likely to occur. For instance:

As we walked around, Jeff pointed out the significant landmarks and borders of the division; the post office, night clubs, famous shops, and so on. But the territory was not just marked by physical entities, certain places had particular meaning. A non-descript alley was pointed out as the scene of a police shooting. A street corner represented not just the intersection of two roads, but the site of an armed robbery, where an unarmed uniformed officer was gunned down. Cafes and restaurants were known not just by the quality and the type of food, but by whether they offered a friendly reception to the police. "They're a bit anti", "He's alright, very pro", No we don't go in there, they make us pay."

The Manipulation of Technology

So far I have presented the officers as reacting, albeit
reflexively, to an external environment. However, as Holdaway has demonstrated, officers are not passive respondants to environmental stimuli, they actively intervene in the creation and recreation of that environment. The technology of reactive policing, the cars and the communications system enable officers to turn the boredom and drudgery of police work into excitement. The reality of long periods with nothing to do, except listen to the silent radio, can be translated through the selective use of technology and communications. The fantasy world of the "media cop" can be re-created. Car chases are particularly amenable to such translations. Drivers will sometimes follow a suspected car for a while, giving the driver ample opportunity to try and get away from them. Generally the suspect does no such thing, which gives rise to the comment, "That's a pity, I thought he was going to play".

When chases do occur, it is common practice for the lead car to ask for the chase to be put out on "talk through". This enables all the drivers on the division to pick up the current status and location of the chase. Consider the following example:

Our first port of call was the petrol station so John could pick up the £1 he had won in the lottery. Stewart had joined the van for the rest of the night, unofficially of course. He was supposed to be out walking. As John was getting out of the van, Stewart, who was lying out on the seats in the back of the van, sat bolt up right listening intently to the crackle on the radio. Over the mainset came details of a chase in the adjoining sub-division. John continued to get out of the van.

"For Christ's Sake, John" shouted Stewart. John continued on his path towards the cashier, determined to get his money. "Turn it up!" commanded Stewart to Alan. Alan turned it up and they both listened intently to the progress of the chase. As it moved further away from the
sub-division Stewart got more despondent. The chance of excitement was lost.

John got back into the van. "Come on John", pleaded Stewart. "What? We are miles away from ------- Road?", John replied by way of explanation for his disinterestedness. "It's only a mile away", retorted Stewart.

"Okay, you direct me".

The chase was now over four miles away, on another district, but we headed off to it at full speed. Over the mainset the progress of the chase was being given in every detail so that other units could assist.

"Seventy miles an hour, Eighty miles an hour, and he's on the wrong side of the road now. He's turning back over......" "Whoopee!", went up the shout from Stewart. It looked as if the chase was heading back on to their sector. Stewart continued to direct..........As we turned down the streets where the chase was coming to an end there were sirens and lights everywhere. I counted seven area cars, 1 IRU and, with us, that maked nine units. As John expressed it later, "Half the Met. seemed to turn out".

The ritual of the chase is actively sought out by officers to relieve boredom, and to engage in fast, exciting work that measures up to officers' self conceptions. Police work gets done all the same, but the manner and style of its performance simultaneously serves the goals of the occupational culture.

The technological and social organisation of the communications system provides a mechanism through which scarce police resources are selectively deployed to incidents. The outcome of this selectivity is determined as much by organisational structure as by the occupational culture. From the patrol officer's point of view, the allocation of different types of work to different functions leads to some postings being valued above others. In a similar fashion, the situated
reading of messages in the light of occupationally relevant criteria results in some calls being treated as more valuable than others. However, officers do more than just react blindly to calls. Through manipulation of the technology and communications system of reactive policing, they can transform police work in line with their own expectations.

While the technological and social organisation of the communications systems, in part, determines the quantity and quality of the police response to an incident, it is only when officers arrive on scene that they can evaluate the action (if any) necessary to resolve the situation. The next chapter explores the ways in which officers manage the public so as to allow them the possibility of determining a resolution.
The next section focuses on the manner in which patrol officers intervene in the lives of the public which they police. Rather than focusing on why the public call the police or why police officers choose to intervene in particular situations of their own accord, the central concern will be how such interventions are managed.

In the previous chapters, it has been argued that the "terms of trouble" provided, in part, a culturally derived solution to the organisational and environmental problem posed by the practice of policing. While it is true that most encounters with the public are trouble free, officers are aware that they have the potential to go "griefy" on them. The result of this awareness is to heighten the officers' need to establish control over incidents by creating the conditions under which their authority to define and determine resolutions is upheld.

If we accept that one of the primary concerns of officers is the avoidance of negative sanction, then it is necessary to ask what resources officers can bring to bear to achieve this end. The terms of trouble indicate primarily how officers avoid within-the-job trouble and what officers can do to to minimise its consequences once it has occurred. What they do not indicate is how officers prevent trouble arising in the first place and, to some degree at least, if officers can prevent trouble arising on the job, they can minimise within-the-job trouble. The decisions and actions taken at incidents reflect
concern to control the relationships between themselves and the various publics on the division, to maintain their capacity to intervene authoritatively in any incident, and to preserve their own and others belief that they are on top of the area. (Chatterton, 1978: 115).

What this makes explicit is that the avoidance of on-the-job trouble is concerned with the issue of control, and the ability to impose and maintain control is fundamentally related to how power is exercised. To address the issue of how officers manage encounters with the public, it is first necessary to address the issues of power. Power is like the wind, it can only be seen through its effect. In short, the problem is, then, how can power be conceived and what constitutes the exercise of power?

**Power, Authority and Control**

Weber defined power as the:

"probability that an actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which that probability rests." (Weber, 1968: 53).

The utility of this definition, unlike many others (Cf Lukes, 1978 for a full review), is that the manifestation of power is not conceived in terms of the form of its exercise. This has particular value when considering police/public encounters. For instance, consider the difference between the following two hypothetical examples:

A) An officer makes an arrest without resorting to any
form of physical coercion. He merely states that a person is under arrest and the person complies with all the officer's verbal commands with no resistance. On no occasion are "hands laid" on the person.

B) Ten officers are involved in the arrest of a suspect. This necessitates the breaking down of a barricaded door, the use of riot shields for self protection as the man is armed, and weapons to literally crush the resisting suspect into submission.

What Weber's definition enables is a recognition that, because force was not used in the first example, it makes it no less a successful implementation of power. In this sense, Weber's definition is implicitly Hobbesian, recognising that the exercise of power is essentially conflictual. Other theorists from Plato (Cf. Neumann, 1964) through to Parsons (1960) see power as a collective and, to some degree, consensual resource. For the purposes of examining the patrol officer's position, the possibility of conflict and resistance are the more salient features.

Furthermore, Weber's definition invites us to consider how a patrol officer effects his or her will even if the other parties are passively or actively trying to hinder their efforts. In other words, how officers gain compliance. And because it does not specify on what basis the exercise of power lies, for example coercion or legitimately perceived authority, it implies some differentiation between the resources. Indeed, police officers are able to draw on a number of resources to control, and maintain their capacity to control, any situation. They have a symbolic resource - their uniforms; a coercive resource - their fists, handcuffs and truncheons; an organisational resource - their personal radios, which can be used to summon back-up; and an interactional resource - their bodies, and their ability to use talk.

Although it can be argued that compliance ultimately rests
on coercion (Weber, 1968), the manner in which compliance is gained in any particular situation depends on the orientation of the subordinate to the superordinate. This notion of compliance has been developed by Etzioni:

"(Compliance) is a relationship consisting of the power employed by superiors to control subordinates and the orientation of subordinates to this power." (Etzioni, 1961: xv).

Etzioni distinguished between three primary orientating relationships: alienative, utilitarian and normative. The basis for each form of compliance is, respectively, coercive force, instrumental interaction, and shared belief structures. In any given situation, compliance may be imposed, and given, by appeal to either of the three types.

This recognition has important consequences for the study of policing. Generally, most commentators have followed Bittner's definition of policing which equates the police role with the potential and actual use of force. (Cf. Westley, 1970; Rubinstein, 1973; Reiss, 1968; Holdaway, 1983). In arguing with this, I do not want to suggest that the ability to use coercion is not one of the central features of policing, nor that, if compliance is not forthcoming, force will eventually be utilised. Rather, that by making the potential and actual use of force equivalent, some of the more routine and salient features of police public interaction are lost. Sykes argues that, rather than responding to the coercive basis of an officer's authority, in many instances, people are responding to a normative basis of compliance and, thus, grant officers a legitimate right to intervene, even when such interventions are potentially conflictual.

As he writes:

"Is it not possible that the police are called to
resolve the problem, not merely as coercive functionaries, but as mediators, arbitrators, or for personal support? Citizens differ in the amount of resources they possess to resolve disputes or resist victimisation. When their own resources are inadequate they call for help, but by so doing, neither they nor the police assume force will be needed. The case of the domestic quarrel in which the wife turns against the police when they lay their hands on the husband is a case in point. She did not wish her husband beaten or arrested, she wanted an additional resource, officially representing society, to help settle the dispute. Perhaps she hoped that the officers' authority, not their coercive power, would be sufficient.

Some British data can be used to support such a claim. The British crime survey reported that, of those stopped by the police, either in a vehicle on foot or as a suspect in the last five years, 54%, 62% and 65% did not express annoyance with the police action.

However, there are a number of problems with such a position. First, the reasons why people grant a police officer legitimacy raise crucial questions about the nature of power. Indeed, much Neo Marxist work has made such issues the central focus of attention. They have argued that the acceptance of authority is itself imposed by power. Notions such as "hegemony" (Gramsci: 1971) "legitimation" (Habermas: 1975) "ideology" (Lukacs, 1971) all relate to the imposition of authority through power. Many of these ideas have been usefully taken up in the study of policing. For instance, Brogden (1982) argues how the police service has become active in the manufacturing of consent to fend off demands for greater political control, and Hall et al (1978) argued how the manufacture of a moral panic over the issue of mugging was used to establish the legitimacy of one part of the repressive state apparatus.
A second problem with Sykes & Brent's position lies with how legitimacy is inferred. Because citizens in the main do not resist police authority does this mean that they grant them legitimacy? According to Lukes, (1978:639) the acceptance of authority implies a person, "accepts as a sufficient reason for acting or believing something on the fact that he has been so instructed by some one whose claim to do so he acknowledges". Indeed, police officers act on the basis that they do have a legitimate right to intervene in situations and, in practice, this means that officers do not have to proffer reasons for their commands to be obeyed, merely that they should be obeyed because they have a recognised claim to be. While police officers believe that people should grant them the legitimate right to authoritatively intervene, in practice this granting is not related to people's belief structures. In street encounters, officers do not have any access to the belief structures of the people they are trying to control. What they do have access to is the physical manifestations of intent.

The importance of this is that, while, in the majority of police public encounters, the public orientate themselves to the officer's authority and thus avoid potentially coercive force being used, this does not imply that they believe the officer to be acting legitimately. As Weber clearly argued, the motives for compliance and obedience are manifold. People may obey another hypocritically, instrumentally, opportunistically, and so on. The important point is that "in a given case the particular claim to legitimacy is to a significant degree and according to its type treated as "valid", that this fact confirms the position of the person claiming authority and it helps determine the means of its exercise" (Weber,1968: 214).

In terms of the immediate necessity of controlling street encounters, officers are not interested in whether people believe that they have a legitimate right to intervene, merely that they act on the basis that they do. In other words, that the officer's claim is "treated as 'valid'". The granting of this right is not inferred from the belief structures of the
citizens, but manifests itself from the concrete displays of verbal and non-verbal action. If people display overt signs of acquiescence, keeping quiet, obeying commands, answering questions, and so forth, then, whether they are responding to the coercive potential of the office, or to a legitimately perceived authority is, from the officer's point of view, irrelevant.

Although Sykes and Brent's position is untenable from the point of view of motivation, what it does make central is the notion that police officers rarely use force to establish their goals (1983), and that it is sociologically, as well as practically, interesting to examine how control is achieved without the use of force.

However, any discussion of control must first address the issue of the use of coercive force by the police and this will be addressed in the next section.

The Use of Force and the Exercise of Power

"People get hit here", declared the inspector at our first meeting. I nodded wisely and, with no further elaboration, the conversation turned to other things. The inspector's remark was neither an apology nor a confession. It was a statement that control in the inner cities, unlike the pleasanter pastures of Surrey where I had been based before, was often achieved by physical coercion and that I, like the officers working there, would have to come to terms with the occupational necessity of using violence to control people.

The use of force is an everyday occurrence in the policing of Kimberley. True, individual officers do not have to resort to using force every day. However, one of their colleagues will have had to, and they know that every next incident may require its application. Officers regularly push, shove, hold and grapple with people. More occasionally they slap, hit, punch and kick people. On most occasions the application of force
results in no more than a damaged ego, on others it exacts a higher price, bruises, cuts and broken bones.

The right to use coercion as a means of control has been recognised by most commentators on the police as the central feature of the police role. Bittner's widely accepted definition reads thus:

"(The police role) is best understood as a mechanism for the distribution of non-negotiably coercive force employed in accordance with the dictates of an intuitive grasp of situational exigencies". (Bittner, 1978: 33)

Some of the problems with this definition have already been discussed, but part of its enduring utility is that it makes explicit the fact that the central feature of the use of force by the police can only be determined situationally. While legal and organisational rules can attempt to generally limit and proscribe in what circumstances and in what quantity force may be used, they cannot determine in each particular situation whether, and how much, is necessary. This is implicitly recognised in law. A police officer:

"may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances in the prevention of crime, or in effecting or assisting in the lawful arrest of offenders, or suspected offenders or persons unlawfully at large" (Criminal Law Act 1967, s.3).

"may enter (if need be by force) and search any place where the suspect is, or where the constable with reasonable cause suspects him to be." (ibid)

Further, a police officer is empowered to arrest and therefore use reasonable force against anyone who obstructs him or her in the lawful execution of their duty. Thus a constable:
"may arrest without a warrant, any person threatening to 
commit a breach of the peace and any person who 
assaults, resists or wilfully obstructs him in the 
lawful execution of his duty, under circumstances likely 
to cause a breach of the peace (Cf: Sloan, 1980:31).

When Bittner writes 'situationally justified' the law writes 
'reasonable'. and the law does not specify what constitutes 
reasonableness. As Lord Diplock recently ruled.

"What amount of force is 'reasonable in the 
circumstances' for the purposes of preventing a crime is 
in my view, always a question for the jury, never a 
point of law for the judge."
(Cited in Molyneux, 1985:189) 

In effect, then, the standards of reasonableness are determined 
by the commonsense understandings of ordinary men and women who 
constitute the jury and, as Molyneux points out, this must 
include the assumption that "Reasonable men make mistakes in the 
'agony of the moment'" (1985:189).

The law, then, grants police officers the right to use 
force for particular purposes and, to some degree at least, 
tries to limit, in advance, the purposes for which it may be 
used and maintains the right to decide, after the event, whether 
the amount of force was reasonable. In effect, the law tries to 
express, in formal terms, what an American police trainer told 
his recruit class:

"If they resist, you can knock'em on their ass and keep 
knocking 'em until they give up, but that's it" 
(Rubinstein, 1973: 324).

In Kimberley, however, the patrol officer is no mere puppet
of the law. While the law is constraining, it is also a resource. Officers can and do selectively utilise law for purposes which the law did not intend. Similarly, the application of force can be used for a variety of purposes and in a variety of ways, some of which may be legal, others of which may not. However, it may also be used simultaneously for different motives. Consider the following extract from my field notes:

[The van is transporting three prisoners, all white, one female. They are all in their late teens. They have been arrested after a high speed chase across several divisions. They are all very drunk. One of the prisoners has messed themselves and there is a strong smell of faeces in the back of the van. The van has just pulled up into the station forecourt].

The doors of the van are opened and the first two prisoners are escorted out. The last one is slumped on the bench, semi-conscious, hand-cuffed to the officer. "Get up!", shouts the officer as he drags him towards the door. The hand-cuffed youth falls out of the van after him and lands on the tarmac. Another officer grabs him under the arm and the two of them drag him along like a corpse towards the charge room, his feet scraping along the ground.

I do not want to argue whether such use of force was excessive. What is more interesting is that the officers could have achieved the removal of the suspect from the van in a different manner. For instance, the example stands in sharp contrast to the "balletic grace" that Fielding described an officer in Washington displaying when handcuffing and transporting a prisoner (Fielding, 1984). In the above example, although the officer is utilising his legal power to use force in the arrest and detention of a suspect, he is simultaneously using force for
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(PSI, 1983; Vol iii: 150-151).

This raises two major issues. First that a substantial proportion of police officers are, privately at least, critical of their colleagues' use of force. Second, the use of unnecessary force is illegal. Therefore, if officers have reasonable suspicion that their colleagues are guilty of its use, then they have grounds for arrest. However, as recent cases have made very clear (CF Guardian Feb 18/ 19/ 20), police officers are unwilling to utilise their powers in this way.

The reasons for such toleration can be hinted at if we accord the patrol officer the same appreciation as interactionists have argued should be afforded the deviant. One of the three main elements in social bonding is commitment. Goffman defined commitment as:

An individual becomes committed to something when because of the fixed and interdependent character of many institutional arrangements, his doing or being this something irrevocably conditions other important possibilities in his life, forcing him to take courses of action, causing other persons to build up their activity on the basis of his continuing in his current undertakings, and rendering him vulnerable to unanticipated consequences of those undertakings. He thus becomes locked into a position and coerced into living up to the promises and sacrifices built into it (Goffman, 1961: 88-89).

The most important reference group for a patrol officer is his or her colleagues. It is they he or she will expect to provide back-up in an emergency and, if necessary, risk their lives in so doing. Practically all officers agree that 'you can't police by the book' and thus expect to have to lie and cover for colleagues in a variety of ways, and expect their colleagues to do the same for them. These factors, coupled with the social
isolation described earlier (Chapter 3), create a situation where commitment to the peer group overrides other less tangible concerns.

Limitations on the Use of Force

In spite of the existence of what Westley has termed 'a morality of secrecy and violence', officers do not act as though there are no checks upon their power to use force. There are three primary constraints which limit officers' desire to use force: organisational/legal, group/cultural, and individual.

Organisational/Legal

The use of force opens up the possibility of a complaint being made by a member of the public. And, while patrol officers will hope for the support of their senior officers in such circumstances, it cannot be guaranteed. As the saying goes, "They'll just leave you in the shit". As one officer described:

It's all right for the do-gooders in the press to go on but they don't have to put up with what we have to. For instance, a PC of ten years, and a good copper too, was involved in an incident with a group of yobs. They were beating him up, kicking him, and so on. Help arrived and they arrested this one lad. They got him in the back of the car and he was still struggling and mouthing it off and generally giving aggro. The PC gave him a punch, and it caught him in the eye, giving him a black eye. The PC was marched out of the force for assaulting a prisoner in the back of the car!"
Thus, even where force is viewed as legitimate from the point of view of the relief, courts and senior officers have different standards. The use of force is the most likely factor to give rise to a serious complaint. As the PSI study revealed, 38% of complaints received against officers were in regard to the excessive use of force. Although few complaints are ever substantiated, this is due less to the zealousness of the investigation mechanism and more to the impossibility of getting patrol officers to testify against each other. Officers are reluctant to lay themselves open to official scrutiny, since, even if there is not enough evidence for the complaint to be upheld, the officer may be liable for internal discipline arising from the case. Fines, transfer and demotion are all used this way. (PSI, 1983, Vol iii: Ch 6).

Officers believe that complaints are often made maliciously and that it is in the nature of the job that people sometimes will be aggrieved by their actions, even when they are acting legitimately. As several officers told me, "If you haven't a couple of complaints against you, you can't be working". On the other hand, they realise that the complaints procedure levels an official mark on their records which will be used for assessments by their seniors. As one officer who wanted to become a dog handler told me, "First the Superintendant has to agree. He'll check your records and make sure you're not the sort of bloke that hits anything that moves."

Further, police officers have no special indemnity for the use of force, therefore, they cannot justify its application with regard to their office. This is brought out most clearly in relation to the Home Office guidelines for the use of firearms, "(T)he responsibility for the use of the firearm is an individual decision which may have to be justified in legal proceedings" (cited in Molyneux, 1985:199).

Cultural/Group Constraints
As we have already seen, these organisational and legal constraints are buffered against by the occupational solidarity of the lower ranks. However, there are limits to such solidarity. When force is used, its results can be unpredictable and it may necessitate some form of cover up, on behalf of the officer by the relief. If the force results in broken bones, cuts and bruises, etc., it will have to be formally accounted for by the station officer. Sufficient evidence must be presented, on paper at least, to justify the injuries. If a cover up is staged, other officers are immediately implicated, either actively, by swearing false statements, or passively, by turning a blind eye. While such reciprocity is expected and is part of the solidarity demanded, an officer cannot expect his or her colleagues to expose themselves to the risk of disciplinary action on their behalf too often.

Individual Constraints

On an individual level, when an officer resorts to the use of force in an incident, he is immediately increasing his risk. The only effective way a person can resist is by the use of force in return. Such a situation increases the officer's likelihood of being injured and it also runs the possibility of escalation. This is particularly the case when there are bystanders present who could intervene on behalf of the suspect. There are also less instrumental reasons limiting the use of force. As regular practitioners in the art of coercion officers develop a personal morality of force.

The development of such a morality is out of the scope of this study. However, as Muir has illustrated, in the United States, officers do come to terms with the use of force by developing a legitimating belief structure which orders, and makes coherent, their activities in terms of a personal world view. The development of such a position rests on the recognition of the need to use coercion coupled with a
philosophical perspective on the human condition. For Muir, the 'Professional' police officer was the one who felt "morally reconciled to using coercion and at the same time he reflected empathetically upon the condition of mankind." 36% of Muir's sample of officers displayed this trait.

Although police officers can and do use force for a variety of purposes and in a variety of ways, as we have seen there are limits to its application. Force is rarely used by police officers as an end in itself. The primary reason for the use of force in street encounters is to establish and maintain control of an incident. However, as has already been noted, force is but one resource on which police officers are reluctant to rely if other less risky mechanisms can be utilised. The diagram below seeks to formally tease out some of these other resources at the officer's disposal.
SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF CONTROL STRATEGIES

IS IT IMMEDIATELY APPARENT THAT CONTROLLING THE SITUATION WILL BE PROBLEMATIC?

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**OFFICER REQUESTS BACK-UP**

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LEVEL A

OFFICER(S) ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH & MAINTAIN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION BY MERE PRESENCE: DEFINITIONAL REGULATION.

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SUCCESSFUL

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UNSUCCESSFUL

LEVEL B

OFFICER(S) ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH & MAINTAIN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION BY USING VERBAL COMMANDS AND GESTURE. IMPERATIVE REGULATION

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SUCCESSFUL

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UNSUCCESSFUL

LEVEL C

OFFICER(S) REPEATS VERBAL COMMANDS

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SUCCESSFUL

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UNSUCCESSFUL

LEVEL D

OFFICER(S) ATTEMPT TO UTILISE PHYSICAL RESTRAINT TO ESTABLISH CONTROL. COERCIVE SUPERVISION AND IF NOT ALREADY DONE REQUEST BACK-UP

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SUCCESSFUL

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UNSUCCESSFUL

LEVEL E

OFFICER(S) ATTEMPT TO CONTAIN THE SITUATION UNTIL BACK UP ARRIVES

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SUCCESSFUL

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LEVEL F

BACK UP ARRIVES: A LOOP IS ENTERED WHEREBY THE BACK-UP ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH CONTROL AND CONTINUES TO DO SO UNTIL CONTROL IS ESTABLISHED

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UNSUCCESSFUL

OFFICERS LOSE CONTROL OF THE INCIDENT RESULTING IN THE POSSIBILITY OF SUSTAINING INJURY AND/OR LOSING THE SUSPECT

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CONTROL ESTABLISHED AND MAINTAINED
Towards a Model of Control

The above model was derived by analysing all the calls to "disturbances" recorded in my field notes. The reason for this selection is twofold. First, they are fairly common calls and thus, even with the attrition rate due to other officers already having dealt with the call or there being no trace on arrival, 12 incidents remained. Second, such calls are the most likely to involve more than just victims. They can relate to fights, suspects on premises, domestic disputes, etc., and are, generally, those calls which are the most problematic for the police to deal with.

The individual stages of the model, labelled A to F represent the most forceful strategy in each incident used by the officer to establish and maintain control. These have then been presented as incremental stages which, as each is unsuccessful, results in the next stage being tried until, ultimately, coercive force is used by one officer or, if necessary, by more and more officers until the situation is brought under control.

I want to examine each stage in turn and illustrate in detail the forms of control strategy that officers routinely utilise. The model assumes that officers' activities can be treated as displays of "strategic interaction". Goffman defines Strategic Interaction thus:

"Individuals typically make observations of their situation in order to assess what is relevantly happening around them and what is likely to occur. Once this is done, they often go on to exercise another capacity of human intelligence, that of making a choice from a set of possible lines of response. Here some sort of maximisation of gain will often be involved, often under conditions of uncertainty or risk. This
provides one sense in which an actor is said to be rational" and also an ethically neutral perspective from which to make judgements concerning the desirability of a various course of action." (Goffman, 1970: 85)

Police officers, then, are being considered as players in Goffman's game of strategic interaction. First, they are have to make an assessment of a situation based on the information available at the time and the likelihood of various outcomes occurring. Second, they have to decide what is the correct response having weighed up the situation. This will involve calculating the possibility of risk and injury to themselves, the chance of being successful, the possibility of a good arrest etc. However, as van Maanen (1978b) reminds us, the shape of police/public encounters cannot be determined from without. The interaction and the various strategies called upon to deal with an incident can change as the course of the interaction proceeds. From the patrol officer's point of view this will depend on whether the other parties to the encounter are orientating to his or her authority.

The police role is inextricably bound up with the use of force. Paradoxically, however, the use of force to control people is the exception rather than the rule. As Sykes and Brent have illustrated, officers have at their disposal three types of control strategies which they term, definitive, imperative and coercive supervision. Definitional supervision relating to questions such as "Where do you live?" or "Do you know why I stopped you?" allow the other party to hone in on the officer's cognitive domain. If an answer if given to the question then, to a large degree, the officer has established control, since the other is displaying an orientation to the officer merely by answering the question. Imperative supervision relates to the use of command like statements such as "Get out of the car" and
coercive supervision relates to the threat of force, for instance, "Get out of the car or you will be arrested." (Sykes and Brent, 1981).

The importance of Sykes and Brent's study is to illustrate that "talk" is the primary resource officer's have at their disposal for establishing control. This is perhaps even more important in the British context. In contrast to America, where search and handcuff are obligatory, even arrest situations are remarkably unforceful. Although it is a legal necessity for the officer to "lay on hands" to indicate to the arrested person that they are now under the officer's control, this is often achieved with the minimum of physical contact, for instance a hand placed lightly on the arm or the back. Thus, even where force is being used its application is more symbolic than physical.

The purpose of the above model is to try and tease out the manner in which power is exercised and control is achieved. A word of warning, the model is not a representation of any single incident and cannot be treated as such. Its ontological status is as a heuristic device to enable an analysis of the strategies that are routinely utilised. In the analysis below, the illustrations are not confined to disturbance calls.

Mere Presence as a Control Strategy
(Level A)

In the main, police officers appear to do very little to establish control of situations and achieve the necessary deference to their authority. Perhaps the coercive potential of the office is being deferred to, or the belief that they are acting legitimately. Whatever the reasons, power is being exercised and, in the main, it requires little work on the part of the police officer to establish his or her right to authoritatively intervene.
Consider the following example:

As Martin was walking down the high street on foot patrol a man tried to park his car on a yellow line in front of the hamburger store. The driver looked up, saw the officer. The officer shook his head and gave a wry smile. The driver drove off down the high street.

In this example, there is an almost immediate orientation to the officer's authority. The slight shake of the head is enough for the driver to change his behaviour in the manner desired by the officer. The interaction is kept to the miniminum. A set of culturally available symbols are being relied upon for the parties to make sense of each other: the yellow lines, the uniform, a shake of the head, all come together to provide the potential offender with enough information about the officer's intent and defer to his authority. By physically doing very little the officer has controlled a situation. Of course, such situations are unlikely to result in serious conflict between an officer and a potential offender. However, consider the following situation which involves the arrest of a disqualified driver:

By the time we were out again it was light and the world was starting to come to life, the traffic increasing and the buses starting to run. Russ informed me that this was a good time to find disqualified drivers as they headed off to work. (The station produces a list of disqualified drivers in the area, with the make of car, registration number, etc.) So, as we cruised the early morning streets, they checked to see whether the cars they knew which should have been stationary had moved. Russ asked if Drew would go down to ......Road where he knew that a D.D. was using his car and should be heading off to work about now. As we turned into the
road, a man came out of his house. "That's him!", exclaimed Russ with glee, "Oh this is a bonus and it's double time." (referring to the fact that he was already working overtime at less than eight days' notice at one and a quarter time and, if they went on past six, it would be double time.

Drew parked the car up in the next road and then waited for the man to drive past. Sure enough a few minutes later he did. Drew followed for a few yards, flashed his headlights and the car stopped. Before Drew and Russ could get out of the car the man was out of his, casually waiting for them to approach. [1] (Giving rise to the comment from Drew that the man had obviously been stopped before). The man, white, in his mid thirties, dressed in jeans and a bomber jacket, stood by the side of his car.

"Have you got a licence to drive that car?", asked Russ.
"Yes," replied the man confidently.
"Have you got it on you?"
"No, it's at home."
"Are you disqualified?"
The man shrugged, gave a half smile, and agreed with resignation.
"I'm afraid that you're under arrest."
Without any further comment, the man slowly began to walk towards the officers indicating that he was not going to give any trouble. [2]
"Where are you going?", asked Russ in a friendly tone.
"Off to work---I've got to be there at seven to open up. How long is this going to take?"
"Oh, not long".
Russ continued to chat with the man about a job and so forth and assured him that they'd have it over and done
with in no time." [3]

Back at the station, the man was taken into the charge room and the sergeant came into process him. Every effort was made to speed the process up. (It was more like being at the dentist than a police station, the whole affair being dealt with, with no apportioning of blame.)

The sergeant asked if the man wanted to make a phone call. He didn't. The whole process was over in half an hour. He was arrested at 0607 and released at 0640. As he was released, the sergeant suggested the quickest way the man could get to work.

Back in the charge room, Russ turned to me, "This should be good for an hour's overtime at Bank Holiday rate."

The sergeant looked up and said that he'd be finished by seven, to which Russ retorted that the sergeant didn't know how slowly he typed. They both smirked at each other knowingly.

Even in such a potentially conflictual situation as an arrest, there is an almost immediate orientation to the officers' authority. The driver could have engaged them in chase, or could have been generally uncooperative. Instead, he displayed the appropriate degree of deference to the officers' authority. At point [1] he stopped and pulled over as soon as he could, and again, at point [2] "without further comment he slowly walked towards the officer". While such displays can indicate to the officer that control is not going to be a problem, they remain aware that, at any time, the person can become uncooperative and offer physical and verbal resistance. Once the arrest seemed secure, Russ tried to normalise the relationship through the use of every day talk [3].

This raises a number of questions. The power relationship between the officers and the offenders is highly asymmetrical. It could be expected in such a situation that displays of intimacy, friendliness etc. would be kept to a minimum by the
most powerful in the interaction. However, the reverse is true. Russ utilises a form of interaction, 'everyday talk', as a means of repairing the imbalance and thus having the effect of placating the man. The relevance of everyday talk is that it requires no special skills on the part of the other to engage in. It is a form with which everyone is familiar and, thus, can be drawn upon with little prior rehearsal on the part of the parties involved. Further, everyday talk takes the form of question and answer which is particularly suitable to a situation where the power relationship is unbalanced. The superordinate, in this case Russ, asks the questions and the subordinate the offender provides the answers. While the content mirrors that of "everyday talk", the form reveals the status difference.

The effect of such a strategy is twofold. First, since no reference is made to the offence or to the moral disposition of the law breaker, the possibility of conflict is reduced. Second, by keeping the offender's 'cognitive domain' fixed to answering questions the officer is, in effect, exercising a subtle form of thought control, limiting the possibility that the offender can think about his aggrieved state.

The use of everyday talk as a device to secure and maintain compliance is illustrated explicitly in this next example.

9.00 a call came over from the station to go to an address to arrest a man for failure to attend court. We entered the fairly well kept forecourt of a large pre-war council estate. There were three officers in the van now as we had picked up Laurie from the adjoining sub-division. All three trooped up to the third floor. Several people had collected below to see what was going on. Russ knocked on the door. A woman answered and then got her husband. The man came to the door. He was black, thirty, wearing smart jeans, and a sweat shirt. He explained that he thought he was supposed to attend court on Thursday. "Oh well, it's no
problem. If you don't mind coming with us now we will have it all sorted out in half an hour." [1] More people had gathered on the balcony and in the forecourt to see what was going on.

Hubert got his coat and came straight away, with the officers, Russ and Quentin flanking him on either side. [2] There was no attempt to physically restrain him. When they got back to the ground floor Hubert went over to talk to some of the people gathered. Quentin went to stop him but Russ interjected. "No, it's alright, Quentin. He's going to be no trouble". [3] Indeed, Hubert followed a few seconds later. "What do you do for a living Hubert," asked Russ chattily. "Car spraying."

"You're just the man I want to see. You don't mind if I sit in the back with Hubert do you Quentin, but I think he can help me."

Russ explained about the problem with the paint work in the car and kept up a very friendly banter with Hubert, thanking him very much for his advice, asking about his job, and so forth. [4]

Quentin decided that, rather than go straight back to the station, he'd try another address where there was an outstanding warrant. The man was in and brought to the van.

Russ introduced everybody as though they they were old friends. "Clive this is John, John this is Hubert," Russ chatted merrily with his charges until we arrived back at the police station. [5]

Almost as a point of contrast to the civil and non-aggressive way in which the two men had been arrested, the WPC grabbed me by the arm and started to march me into the charge room. Hubert and John were left to walk freely. [6]

Again, in this example, we see the instrumental use of talk...
as a strategy for gaining and maintaining compliance. Rather than formally arresting the suspect, Russ presents the problem as one of a technicality which will be sorted out in a short time. Even the form of words, "If you don't mind coming with us now" [1] are calculated to soothe the man into accepting his fate gracefully. By offering the man a choice, the officer is indulging in a calculated degree of sophistry. From the officer's point of view the man does not have any choice. Either he will come quietly or, if not, the officer will physically coerce him. However, the man does have the choice to determine the manner in which he comes. The question allows the man to either accept his fate gracefully and retain the illusion of freedom, or to argue and resist and thereby lose the option of keeping the illusion. The choice may be only a matter of style and not of end result, but such factors, to a large degree, determine the quality and type of policing that members of the public enjoy even when they are on the receiving end of the negative consequences of law enforcement.

Second, the officers utilise their bodies as a resource to enable them to establish control of the situation if Hubert should decide to make a run for it. [2] They flanked him on both sides which, while not actually restraining him, gives them the maximum advantage should he try to run. Interestingly, when Hubert does break away [3], Quentin is ready to bring him back, while Russ has taken the decision that control is non-problematic.

Third the officer again displays the use of everyday talk as a control mechanism [4], and this strategy reaches its peak at point [5] where the situation can almost be described as one of caricature, a point noted by the WPC and ironically commented upon [6].

Talk is, then, one of the most powerful resources that an officer has at his or her disposal for establishing and maintaining control. But this also extends to the use of posture and gesture. The following example makes explicit how members of the public can perceive officers, and how style
becomes more important than content.

[Background. Fletch is trying to gain information from a group of West Indian youths about the whereabouts of a man who is wanted on an outstanding warrant. We are located in a small car park to the rear of the "square". The square is one of the most hostile areas on the division. It is the centre piece of a large multi-storey estate and had a reputation, until recently, as a place where officers would only walk in pairs. Indeed, Fletch has informed the station that he is entering the square and has asked other units to 'keep an eye out for him'. Fletch is trying to talk to a group of rather reluctant black youths who are hanging around two cars, some in the cars other standing around the outside.]

Fletch looks inside one of the cars across the passenger seat. "Who's that inside there?" he asks.
"Can't you tell in the dark", taunts one of the West Indians. "I didn't say anything about all niggers looking the same in the dark," quips Fletch with a smile.
Fletch implores them to tell him where the man on the warrant is and finishes off with "Well, we'll get him in sooner or later."
"Yeah but you've got to catch him first and you know how fast us niggers run", one of the youths retorts with a smile.
Fletch changes his tack and starts to talk to one of the youths about his car. The initial tension is easing despite several more black youths standing around the car, just watching, almost threateningly. Fletch seems prepared to stay and chat. The talk is slow and uneasy, sometimes the questions falling on deaf ears. One of the youths is particularly chatty and Fletch capitalises on this and engages him in a fast banter.

Another foot patrol officer starts to approach from the
far side of the square. As he nears, one of the youths breaks from the loose circle surrounding Fletch. Rather than walk, he moves with a dance that resembles a shadow boxer. The officer approaches him.

"What's all this waving your arms up in the air like a..." Fletch quickly interjects into the officers jibe, "He's alright Paul."

The youth to whom Fletch was talking turned and said "You can tell he's new ... you're alright though, not like some of them." Paul moves through the loose circle and stands with his back against the car his arms folded tightly against his chest. This makes an interesting contrast to Fletch who is moving about, chatting amiably, smiling, his body loose and relaxed.

The combination of factors which come together to form mere presence include speech, body, gesture and posture which gel together to form a minimal control strategy. It is minimal because, on their own, these devices are orientated to by the others in an encounter without recourse to any further strategies. However, if orientation to an officer's authority is not immediately forthcoming, or if these devices to establish and maintain authority fail, officers must do repair work to re-establish their authority.

Verbal and Paralinguistic Control Strategies

(Levels B & C)

If immediate orientation to their authority is not forthcoming then officers must actively intervene to establish it. Officers act on the basis that they have a legitimate right to intervene in any situation that they so deem and on the assumption that other people should also grant them the legitimacy to do so. In the light of this, officers will often explain why they are
stopping a person or a car, especially if it looks as though the person is going to argue or become disgruntled. This, tacitly, appeals to an element of reciprocity. It invites the person to see the officer's actions as legitimate by putting themselves in the officer's shoes. Furthermore, by objectifying the salient features of the stop or intervention, an officer is appealing to the person not to see the activity as directed at them personally. Thus:

"I'm sorry to flag you down madam but we've just had a report of a burglary in ------- and I'm stopping all vehicles heading this way. Could I just have a look at your driving licence?"

or:

"You've got to see it from my point of view. I see the three of you hanging around an obviously stolen car."

The devices of telling people why they have been stopped, the invitational form of requesting and of using questions, not only to gain information but also to place the other in the officer's cognitive domain, are all brought together in the following incident.

As we are driving through one of the older estates, Terry's attention is drawn to a lone black man in his early thirties, bomber jacket, jeans, walking slowly down the road. The van crawls behind him for several yards. Terry winds down the window, passes him, pulls up, and waits for the man to pass. The man is carrying something in his hand which Terry cannot make out. As he passes Terry asks from the window, "Can I have a word with you?"

The man stops but says nothing. Alison gets out of the
back, Terry the front.

"Where do you live mate?" [1]
Silence.
"Where are you going?" [2]
"Home," the man says sharply. [3]
"Where's that?" [4]
The man stares back blankly. Terry sighs, turns to me,
and gives me a 'here we go again' look.
"What's your name?"
"Why did you stop me?" rebuffs the man. [5]
Terry explains that he had seen a man walking along the
street carrying something in his hand, and he wanted to
see what it was. [6]
"No, why's you stop me?" says the man aggressively.
"I don't need any reason", retorts Terry impatiently,
"just a routine stop."
"Do you mind if I look in your pockets?". [7]
Terry moves forwards to take a look in the man's jacket
pocket. The man pulls back a little, resisting the
search. Terry continues to try and search the jacket
pocket without success, so he switches to the front
trouser pocket, making to dip into it with his
fingers. [8] The man pulls back, tensing his body and
putting his hand on his hip to thwart Terry's attempt.
"Can I have a look in there? What you got in there that
you don't want me to see?" [9]
"Nothing," says the man frostily.
"Why can't I have a look then?" Terry's voice is giving
way to rising anger.
"What are you looking for?"
"Drugs?"
"Look, I'm just walking home."
Terry goes to search his pocket. The man tenses again.
"OK, you pull it out," suggests Terry, indicating that
he doesn't care who pulls it out as long as he sees the

Page 209
pocket.
The man holds a fixed and hostile stare straight into
Terry's eyes. A few tense seconds pass and then he
begins to empty his pockets. He produces a wad of
money, quite a lot, in fact, in fives and tens.
"You got a job"? asks Terry.
"What do you mean?", the man snaps, resenting the
implication.
Terry tries to get out of the faux pas rather clumsily.
(I don't recall the words)
"Yes, I work for my money."
"What do you do?"
"I said I work", his voice getting more hostile.
Terry goes to check the man's back pocket. The man
looks as though he is going to be un-cooperative again
and then changes his mind, turning his body to allow the
officer to search him. The only thing in his back
pockets is his travel card.
Terry asks the man his name.
"I'm not under arrest am I?"
"No"
"Then I don't have to tell you nothing."
Terry looks at the traveller's card and radios for a
computer check.
"How old are you?"
Silence
"Thirty?"
Silence
The computer check comes back negative.
"I've heard about you but I've never experienced you
before," challenges the man.
"OK", you can go now", instructs Terry as he starts to
go back to the van, not rising to the bait.
The man just stands on the side of the road, staring
into space. Terry gets in the van. The man continues
to stand impassively, staring at the van. He is still
there when we round the corner. As we approach the
junction Terry looks at me, shrugs and declares, "Why
me?"

In the above example, the man's open defiance of the officer by
not answering his first question [1] is met with nothing more
than a restatement of a question [2]. Even when the man does
answer [3] it is unhelpfully obtuse and the officer rejoins with
another question [4]. This process continues until the man
challenges the officer [5] and the officer invites him to see it
from his point of view [6].

Even with this level of challenge to his authority, the officer
still retains the invitational form when asking the man if he
can look in his pockets. [7] and when this is rebuffed, a
command is not issued, the question is merely restated in a
slightly more forceful way. To this is added another question
which intimates that non-cooperation is a sign of guilt. [9] As
the incident continues, although the man only gives the barest
minimum of co-operation, the officer manages to carry out the
purpose of the stop through a delicate process of negotiation,
each stage being negotiated step by step, until eventually the
officer is satisfied.

In the above example, the officer controls the situation
almost entirely through the use of verbal strategies and his
body. Although the officer touches the man, he does not use any
force in trying to achieve his goal. The physical contact
initiated by the officer is not for the purpose of control.
When the man offers resistance he is not coerced into accepting
the officer's authority, instead a new process of negotiation is
entered into [8].

However, if the others in an encounter do not display
orientation to the officer's authority, eventually the officer
will either have to abandon his or her attempts, utilise more
forceful measures to establish control, and/or request back-up.
Force as a Control Strategy
(Levels A B C D)

As the model is set out it suggests that force is a last resort measure which will only be used after other resources have been tried and failed. This is in accord with much of the sociological literature Muir, (1977) Sykes & Brent (1983). Muir sees the potential of the use of force as increasing incrementally as each successive challenge to the officer's authority continues. He terms this the 'extortionate transaction'. Even Sykes and Brent, who reject Muir's model of the extortionate transaction, see force as occurring towards the termination of an incident, as if force is, in some way, the ultimate state. (Sykes and Brent, 1983).

However, force is merely one resource through which control can be established and, as the next few examples will clearly illustrate, force can be used at any stage during the encounter as a control strategy. Once control has been successfully established then the other resources can be brought to bear. The use of force is not, then, necessarily related to arrest or termination. For instance:

It is approximately 11.30. We are driving along the High Street. Two men, both white in their late teens, are grappling on the pavement outside a chip shop. Terry is not too sure where to put the van as there are railings all along the side of the road and he is heading in the wrong direction. Rather than deliberate, Terry makes a sharp right across the traffic flow, driving the van between the only gap in the railings for fifty yards or so. He brings the van to a halt within a few feet of the wrestling bodies and leaves it jutting out into the road, blocking one line of traffic. The men are still struggling and shouting aggressively at
each other. Their two mates, acting rather like boxing seconds, are trying unsuccessfully to pull them apart. All are fairly drunk. Terry calls for some assistance [1] and then steps in the middle, roughly pulling the combatants apart.[2] As he bends down, his radio springs free of his back pocket and smashes him over the back of the head. He double takes and looks stunned and angry. He seems unsure as to what hit him. The flailing stops. Alison has the man on the ground by the shoulder. One of the seconds looks concerned and asks if Terry is alright. Terry still looks a bit dazed but he starts to push the combatant who is still standing away from the one on the ground. The two men are still trying to have a go but each of the seconds are trying to discourage them from doing anything rash. Terry is placed firmly in the middle. [3]

"It's nothing really, just had a bit too much to drink, that's all," pleads one of the seconds. The area car arrives and Terry calls the rest of the back-up off. However, within the next minute, as Terry put it later, "Every fucking car on the division turned up." - Kl, K2, the Panda, the inspector's car, the crime car.

The driver of the first car to arrive jumps out, picks up the body that Alison is still holding on the ground. He looks at Terry, "Where do you want him? In the van?" [4] Terry indicates to the officer with his hands to hold on a minute so he can assess the situation. Seven or eight officers are now on the pavement and others are waiting in cars. Terry asks the two men if they are going to stop fighting now [5]. The youth who is being held by the other officer starts to struggle, "I'm fucking going get him", he screams, his shoulders bearing forwards and his fists clenched. The officer is
forcibly having to restrain him. "OK, in the back of the van", Terry threatens rather than orders. The youth stops struggling and shuts up. The seconds intervene and suggest that they should go home. "Yeah that's a good idea -- you go that way", says Terry, pointing. He turns to the other youth, "You live that way don't you", more a command than a question. The youths start to walk off with their respective seconds and, as they go, one of the seconds apologises for all the trouble they've caused.

In the above example, Terry saw it as immediately apparent that assistance would be needed. While Terry calls for back-up, which take no more than a few seconds, the combatants have time to stop fighting of their own accord and orientate themselves to the officer's presence. They do not. The chance of using either verbal command or gesture to establish control is therefore remote since the disputants are completely engrossed in their own affair. Therefore, stages A, B & C are by-passed and force is used to establish control at the onset. Terry then uses his body as a means of control by physically placing it in the middle of the two disputants as a buffer between them. Only when control has been established does Terry try to find out what is going on.

The resolution to the incident is not achieved by arrest, although one of the youths comes close as soon as the other officers arrive. Rather than ordering the combatants to do anything, Terry again makes use of the invitational form. He asks if they are going to stop fighting. One of the youths indicates that he is not and Terry threatens him with arrest if he continues to resist. The youth ceases. The final resolution is again achieved invitationally. "You live that way don't you", cannot be read as a literal question since Terry has no interest in such information. It is being used and understood as an invitation to leave the situation without being arrested. If the combatants accept then they can go, if they
don't they will be arrested. They choose not to be arrested.

What starts to become acutely apparent from these examples is that officers regularly have to deal with challenges to their authority and that, to a degree, their major response is to merely reissue a verbal instruction. As the number and force of the challenges increase then there is a likelihood that the form of the response will change. Moreover, officers utilise invitational strategies as a bridge between definitional and imperative supervision. It is as if there is some truth to that mythical question, "Are you going to come quietly?" Officers can, and do, allow members of the public the right to determine the quality and quantity of force that is used in gaining their compliance.

Additionally, rather than the level of forcefulness increasing in a linear progression, there is some considerable movement back and forth between the different levels. Consider the following example:

It was nearly nine-thirty. John decided to stay with Quentin in the Panda until they went in. "Burglary in Progress at --------- House". Quentin accepted the call adding that he was nearly on scene. He turned the car round fast and sped towards the location. We arrived in the estate, one of the older pre-war blocks, with the familiar signs of delapidation, abandoned cars, boarded up flats, etc.

John jumped out of the car and found the right stairway. I followed but let Quentin overtake me on the stairs. "Put it down", [1] came the booming order from John. A West Indian man in his late thirties, dressed in workman's clothes was crouched by the front door of a boarded up flat, about to strike another blow to the door with an eight inch cold chisel. The man did not respond immediately. "PUT IT DOWN!" [2] John boomed again, this time with a slow deliberate edge to his voice. The man dropped the chisel. Both Quentin and
John moved in, pulled the man from his feet and then roughly turned him around so he was facing the other way. "WALK", commanded Quentin, "Down to the other end and put your arms against the wall." Quentin and John edged behind the man. He put his arms against the wall, legs straddled. They quickly and efficiently frisked the man, each taking one side of his body. The man appeared to be clean. Quentin moved back towards the door and John told the man to stay where he was.

A pain of glass had been smashed and the boarding, obviously put up by the council, had been ripped away. Some neighbours had started to come out and peer from their doorways. Quentin wanted to look inside the flat, but it was dark. A smell of paraffin wafted out. Quentin radioed back to the station and asked for the arca car to bring a "Seek and Search" torch. It arrived a couple of minutes later. John kept an eye on the suspect, making him stay at the end of the walkway. The two other officers came up with the lamp. Quentin went in, and asked me to stay outside, "Just in case". While Quentin was inside, John started to ask the man some questions. He said that he lived there, but when he had arrived home from work he'd found the place boarded up. He produced some identification on request and it had the right address on it.

Quentin emerged from searching the flat and said that all appeared to be in order, but what was the man doing. John explained and said that he was satisfied. Quentin thought that they should make some more checks. John looked at his watch. It was 2148. "I want a pint of Fosters", he declared. Quentin shrugged and turned to the man. "Try and keep the noise down", and with that they left. Back in the car, Quentin radioed through to the station. "Yes, all appears to be in order. A man
effecting repairs to his property."

The order of the various controlling techniques in the above example is thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command</th>
<th>[1]</th>
<th>Put it down</th>
<th>Resisted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Command</td>
<td>[2]</td>
<td>Put it down</td>
<td>Complied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force</td>
<td>[3]</td>
<td>Pulling the man up</td>
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<td>Command</td>
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While the man failed to obey the first command, which is not unreasonable, given that it probably took him a few seconds to work out what was happening, he was compliant at all other stages. There are, however, five other stages of imperative supervision and force that are utilised until the officers are satisfied that the man does not present a problem of control. Once they have established control to their satisfaction then the information search begins and, as we can see at termination, even this level of forcefulness is not related to an arrest strategy. Its purpose is solely one of creating the conditions under which other forms of supervision become appropriate. The next example clearly illustrates how the range of techniques are welded into a coherent control strategy and how the level of forcefulness varies at different stages within the incident.

"Woman beserk at ------ Library". It was on KD's ground and, after checking with Russ, Quentin accepted the call from the mainset. Neither was quite sure of the location, and the first stop was the wrong library. The one we wanted was three hundred yards down the road. A car from another district had also accepted the call and pulled up behind us. Russ explained where we were going.
The siren and light went on, and we sped the three hundred yards to the library. Quentin missed the turning but the people waving and shouting, "Over here, over here," soon put him right. Russ jumped out of the van. A large West Indian woman in her mid twenties was reeling and thrashing in the middle of a crowd of people, Russ approached and she started to sprint off. [1] "Come back here" [2], Russ commanded. The woman continued to run and Quentin sprinted after her [3]. Russ caught up with her and grabbed her by the arm. [4] "Leave me alone," she screamed.

We were now standing on a path way bounded by waist high railings in the middle of the grassed area in front of the library, and away from the main body of spectators.

"Now just quieten down luv, [8]" he said firmly but without malice. "Fuck off!" [7]
The woman struggled and broke free of Russ's grip and started to run further along the path. [9] Quentin headed her off a few yards along the path and edged her back towards the railings. [10]
"CUNT! FUCK OFF!" The woman started to try and move off again. [11] She had her back towards the railings, Quentin was on one side facing her a few feet away. Russ was on the other side. With his back and side and using the outside of his arm, he edged her back towards the railings, thus restraining her with little direct force other than body weight and protecting himself from her kicks.[12]
"OK now quieten down," Russ ordered firmly. [13]
"Take your fucking hands off me you cunt. You want pussy." The woman started to rub her breasts provocatively. Her summery blouse had come open and she
continued to rub her breasts through a skimpy bra. [14]
"Look I just want you to calm down." [15]
"I've done nothing, nothing. I got to pick my daughter up from the nursery". Russ continued to stand with his back towards her and Quentin faced her a little way back. The woman seemed to calm down and started to make sobbing noises. "Let me go home," she pleaded meekly. [16]
"OK" in a minute reassured Russ. [17]
Then without warning she started to try and run away again. [18] Russ blocked her way. [19]
"Let me go you cunt. You want pussy. I got blood, I got blood." The woman started to rub her crutch pulling her dress up to her thighs. Russ backed off a little as she had stopped trying to run. A special constable had arrived and the four of us stood in a cordon around her. She started to pull her knickers down and squat in the pavement as if going to urinate. [20]

Russ made the decision to arrest her. He signalled his attention to Quentin, "Right that's enough I'm taking her in." He took hold of one arm, Quentin the other, and they started to carry and drag her the hundred yards or so towards the van. [21]

In the above example, we can see how the officer utilises command, force and mere presence as the situation dictates. A schematised version is presented in Figure One below. While the model and the literature assume that force is the highest stage in the encounter, the last two examples illustrate that an increase in the level of forcefulness does not preclude a subsequent decrease. Thus we move from force to command to definitional supervision and back to force again (6,7,8,9). Between points six and nine it appears, briefly, that the woman may have finally calmed down and, although both officers are still controlling her physical space, Russ has switched from
Imperative Command [7] to less firm and more definition forms of supervision [8,9] issued in mellow and reassuring tones. He has even suggested that the woman might be allowed to go home which is highly unlikely.

Figure One
schematic representation of
control strategies used in a specific incident

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Despite coercion being used directly on four separate occasions, it appears that control has been established and that the woman is now responding to less forceful measures being used to instigate the officers' authority. Point [9] is perhaps the crucial decision stage in the incident. If the woman ceases to resist, becomes cooperative and compliant, the decision as to her fate will be taken in regard to the original incident (of which Russ knows little). She may be released, if the original information turns out to be exaggerated or perhaps arrested for criminal damage. This will depend on a host of factors, such as whether the complainant wants to press charges, how severe the damage is, and so on. However, all this is overridden as she continues to resist and the decision to arrest is taken on her demeanour alone. Thus, she is dragged screaming and kicking all the way to the back of the van. (see page 74)

The level of forcefulness is negotiated; there is a complex
ritual of move and countermove. In overall terms there is a strategy of containment and control. However, different tactics are selected as appropriate to different stages of the incident. Certainly, not all troublesome police encounters are handled with such a range of sensitive and measured tactics but it again reminds us that officers offer people choices as to how control is going to be exercised and as to how people will submit to police authority. That police will control a situation is non-negotiable. However, the manner in which control is established is often negotiated.

Containment and Backup
(Levels A,B,C,D,E,F)

In all the examples so far the possibility of officers losing control of the incident has been remote. The others in the encounters have either responded to the verbal and non verbal regulatutory devices or they have been fairly easy to physically control. There are, however, situations where such control becomes tenuous and, without back-up, officers are liable to either have to back down (a situation I have never seen happen) or try and contain the situation until more officers arrive to help. However, even in these situations arrest is not inevitable. Consider:

We pull round the Estate, in front of us is an orange Cortina cruising very slowly. Terry follows it for about 150 yards and then decides that it is worth stopping. He flashes his headlights and the car pulls over. Terry approaches the driver's side window. The man unwinds the window... (Missing Data) ...."I've been following you for a few minutes and you're going very slowly aren't you?", Terry says by way of explanation as to why he has stopped the man. He asks if the man will give him the keys. The man complies, with no overt hostility or resistance.
"What have you got in your boot?", asks Terry.
For the first time I have a clear view of the occupants of the car: two West Indian males. The driver is in his early thirties, smartly dressed in an open neck shirt and jacket, looking as though he might be off to a night club. The passenger is older and more scruffily dressed.
The man hesitates for twenty seconds before he answers.
"Do you mind if I have a look?", requests Terry. The man says no and Terry heads round to the rear of the car to open the boot. The driver gets out and comes to help Terry find the correct key.
"You off home?", asks Terry chattily.
"Yes".
"Where do you come from?".
The man replies while Terry opens the boot. He checks the contents and everything that the man said was there is there, with the addition of two hifi speakers. Terry questions him about them.
As he is answering the officer's questions, the passenger gets out. He is reeling a little, possibly from the effects of ganja or alcohol. His left eye is all swollen and a recent gash is visible along with the stitches holding it together.
"Why do you stop us when we're driving home?", interrupts the man aggressively. [1] Terry ignores him. [2] "You stop us for nothing," he continues, raising his voice. The driver is looking visibly worried by the trouble his friend is causing. "You only stop us because we're black..... (Missing Data)....... it's worse than fucking Russia here!" [3]
Terry asks him brusquely to get back in the car and to stop shouting. [4] The driver seconds the advice, but the man takes no heed and continues with his vociferous tirade against Terry. He starts to walk away from the car towards the gap in the crash barrier.
"Oy! Come back here", orders Terry. [5] "I'm going home", the man snarls. [6] "You're not going anywhere. Come back here" [7] The man continues to walk towards the gap in the crash barrier. [8] Terry radios for some assistance, before swiftly catching the man up and placing his body between the man and further progress, the opposite way being barred by the crash barrier. Terry does not touch the man to restrain him but walks the man back, edging him with a roll of his upper torso, easing him back towards the car. [9] "It's not like this in Jamaica, a man can walk the street there", the man shouts angrily and a new hail of abuse is started. At the side of the road a group of about fifteen black youths has gathered and, on hearing the new torrent, they start to egg him on. Terry calls for back up again. [10] The situation is now clearly getting out of hand. Terry is starting to lose his patience with the man. The man is leaning against the railings and Terry is standing inches away from him, enabling him to check every move. The crowd, some fifteen to twenty feet away, starts to jeer, the man shouts to the crowd, the crowd shouts, the man shouts back. [11] Without warning Terry squares up to the man. "Just fucking shut up you stupid cunt", he commands. Go on! Go on!", he taunts "You fucking wanker!". Terry continues with his outpourings, no longer maintaining any semblance of coolness. "You heard that", the man appeals to the crowd, "The officer swore at me". "Oh fucking piss off!", says the officer. The other man who, up until now, has been very compliant, turns to his friend and suggests that they go. (More, I think, because he is worried that his friend might do something stupid, than because he wants to defy the officer.)
"You stay there." The man continues to walk towards the door of the car and gets in. The officer abandons trying to control the passenger and walks round the barrier. The passenger gets in the car, the engine starts up. The officer walks in front of the car and places both hands on the front of the bonnet, issuing the challenge that if they want to drive off they will have to run him down. The crowd jeers. The assistance that the officer has now asked for twice still shows no signs of arriving. The officer waits, hands on the car bonnet, staring into the driver's eyes. [12] Within twenty seconds the area car, the inspector's car, and a panda are on scene. The officer moves away from the bonnet. The inspector approaches and asks the officer what is going on. "It's just a simple little stop that has got completely out of hand". The inspector instructs Phil and Leslie to go and quieten the crowd down, and then tries to calm the agitated West Indian man who is still hurling abuse at all and sundry. (For some reason, I am not completely sure why, the man gets back into passenger's seat).

This example poignantly illustrates both the complexity of incidents and the problems that officers face when their authority is continually resisted. From the officer's point of view he is carrying out a routine and, to his mind, a perfectly reasonable car stop. The driver is offering no resistance and being cooperative; it is the passenger who is defiant and, to add to this, there is a large and vociferous crowd gathering who are only vocally supportive of the man but could physically intervene on his behalf.

When the first hint of defiance occurs [1], the officer ignores it [2]. This is unsuccessful as the man continues his tirade. The officer asks the man to get back in the car [3]. The man continues his defiance [4]. The officer issues another command [5] and repeats it [7] when it is ignored [6]. At this
point [8], the officer is faced with a central dilemma. To back down would be to abandon his original goal and to lose face, to continue to expose himself to the risk of having to escalate his use of force, with the possibility of the crowd, which is gathering, intervening on the man's behalf. All officers face the same problem if their authority is challenged and definitional and imperative supervision fails. Either they have to use force to reinstate it, back down or contain the situation until back-up arrives.

It is perhaps in this light that the officer opts for a minimalist strategy of physical containment by controlling the physical space around the man [9], rather than direct physical contact which might have provoked the crowd that had gathered. Also, at this stage, the officer has little grounds for arrest and his legal powers would not offer him much support for the use of force. Moreover, the physical rough and tumble that may result could possibly open up the wound above the man's eye, leading to allegations of assault. In view of these factors, such a minimalist strategy seemed appropriate. However, although this results in him managing to thwart the man's attempt to run away, it leads to the man invoking the support of the crowd on his behalf [10].

What happens next is a puzzle. It is the only time I have seen an officer lose his temper with a citizen (in public). It may be that all we can say about this behaviour is that he lost his temper and that to suggest anything else would be to over rationalise heat-of-the-moment decisions and ascribe motives for which there is little evidence. Bearing this in mind, I would like to suggest an alternative. While recognising that the officer was frightened, with good reason, (I certainly was) and he was also angry, there are certain features which suggest that his behaviour was structured towards a particular goal.

First, he does not once refer to the man's race (this officer has a wide vocabulary of racist terms). Second, he does not touch the man. Rather, it is possible that what he is trying to do is to escalate the confrontation so that the man
gives him positive grounds for arrest. Third, he has now asked for back-up twice [11] which means that he is conveying to his colleagues that the situation is serious. It is not just a case of requiring another vehicle, perhaps to transport a prisoner or aid in a routine search. If he had established control, it would not have required repeating the request. Further, the officer is aware that the reason why back-up is slow in arriving is that there is a serious incident at the other end of the ground. Thus he is taking away officers from something that is probably more important. Finally, he has already asked for back-up once that evening, less than an hour ago. When back up does arrive the, situation must, on face value, warrant it, otherwise the officer will have a credibility problem with his colleagues.

In the end, the officer has only one resource to maintain control of the situation until backup arrives and the officer is forced to combine his body and his authority into the same physical and symbolic unit. If his authority is further violated so will be his body [12]. This is perhaps the ultimate example of restraining force. In essence, he is issuing a challenge, "If you want to defy my authority you will have to take me with you", and, thus, when back-up arrives they are presented with the dramatic and powerful image which needs no explanation.

When an officer calls for back-up, the nature and dynamics of the encounter change since the inter-personal dynamics of control become subservient to the organisational. The shift is not just one of quantity but of quality also. Even where control is still being directly exercised by the individual officer, the physical presence of other officers makes the implicit threat that as much force as necessary will be used to gain compliance, particularary poignant. With regard to this, officers often caustically observe how a suspect's will to fight miraculously disappears as the back-up arrives with lights flashing and sirens blaring.

In small scale incidents, then, back-up plays a relatively
symbolic role in control, the additional officers doing little other than just being there or following the line of the first officer on scene. (Cf incident on page ???). Even when a senior officer does arrive on scene (as above) he rarely takes control but lets the original officer deal with it himself.

Where control has not been established, because one or two officers cannot hope to control such a large disturbance or because a person is armed or so aggressively violent that it is not possible, the senior officer on scene would be expected to take overall command and attempt to direct the proceedings. Moreover, the additional officers arriving on scene will not be constrained by the decisions taken by the first officer on scene.

The final example illustrates how the police, both individually and organisationally, are prepared to escalate the level of forcefulness, both qualitatively and quantitatively, until control is established. However, at this level, the process becomes far more complex since it involves various segments of the police organisation which are competing to establish their own definition of the situation.

We were nearly back at the station when a disturbance call came out. K45 accepted it but Matt decided to go as back up, "Since it's just round the corner". It only took a minute before we were driving into the forecourt of an old, shabby, pre-war estate. The van had already arrived - Terry and Chris could be seen on the fourth floor balcony. G45 arrived and we started to walk slowly towards the stairways. Without warning the relative quiet of the night was rent with the sounds of splintering glass. Matt started to run for the stairs and up the four flights; Matt leading the way, Pam next and me last. As we arrived Leslie, Jake and Chris were standing either side of the door truncheons drawn.
The person inside smashed the glass again, everyone moved back. "Watch yourself at those windows", ordered Terry, pointing to the kitchen windows which Matt and I were standing in front of. We ducked and moved back for cover. Terry and Chris pushed themselves flat against the wall by the side of the door. Terry moved back towards Matt. Terry is covered in glass splinters. He explains what has happened. "I only came up to talk to him. His missus called us 'cos he came back roaring drunk, threw her out of the flat and locked himself in. I banged on the door and Chris put his head down to the eye hole. "Then a fucking iron bar came through the window. It nearly got Chris. Then it came again. I blocked with my truncheon, I think that's when he got hurt. I caught him in the face". (To understand what is going on you have to imagine a typical council flat door, wood at the bottom and a glass window inset in the upper part of the door.) "I think I cut his hand too". They reapproach the door, truncheons drawn, keeping to the sides. "Right are you going to come out?" Inside, the man was screaming, "Leave me alone" over and over.
"Are you going to come out, or are we going to come and get you?", threatens Terry. "Leave me alone," the man screams again. "Something else hits the window and more glass shatters.

The inspector has arrived, accompanied by two other officers. Inside, the sounds of the man still screaming can be heard. Terry and Chris back off to the adjacent flat. A line of seven police officers stand watching the door, pondering what to do. They decide to get two shields over from the divisional station and a sledge hammer to break the door down. In front of the door is a carpet, rolled up and in the way. Terry and Chris, ducking below the firing line, move in, pick it up, check to see that nobody is below and throw it over the balcony. A washing line which is hanging precariously over the door is hastily removed.

Below, there are nine police cars, and fifteen or so officers looking up anxiously. The inspector asks Pam to stand on the stair well and stop any more officers from coming up since there are already seven there and little room to manoeuvre on the narrow balcony.

Pam does as she is requested but, almost immediately, two plain clothes officers push past, not heeding her request. Terry approaches the door again, standing on the far side for cover. "Are you going to come out?" he shouts. "No," comes back the simple reply. "Look, somebody's going to get hurt, because we're going to come in if you don't come out." "Fuck off, leave me alone."

"Why don't you come out?", Terry asks in a softer, more pleading tone. After several more attempts to get the man to talk about coming out Terry has had enough and moves to a less dangerous position. Just as he is out of the firing range, the glass splinters again and a cold chisel comes flying through the window, over the
balcony and lands noisily on the tarmac below.

"Get those people away from there" somebody orders. The crowd that has gathered below is ushered back by some officers.

The inspector thinks it best if everyone on the balcony moves back and just waits for the shields to arrive. We all move back. I start chatting to the plain clothes officers. "Are you a neighbour?", one says, pointing to the the open door. "No, I'm with KH"

"Oh?"

I explain what I am doing. More glass shatters. He doesn't flinch but just keeps talking, asking about my work, and expressing interest. As more glass breaks, I jump, and feel acutely aware that my conversation partner seems completely at ease.

Two shields arrive and are brought up. Terry informs us that, from what he can see, the man has now armed himself with the entire contents of the kitchen drawer. If the shields are going to be effective, three at least would be needed, four would be better. The inspector orders more shields to be brought from the police station and the sledge hammer to be brought up from below.

The hammer is brought up and Leslie starts to smash at the door. The banging reverberates around the whole estate. After fifteen or so blows the door still has not given and another officer takes over. Below, more people have gathered but are keeping a safe distance. As Jake continues to bash at the door, the IRU draw up below. Helmeted and shielded men unload. The inspector calls down for just two more officers with shields. The sergeant leading the officers sends two ahead but continues to head for the stairs. More glass shatters. Despite the Inspector's request, six of the IRU officers come up, accompanied by their sergeant and inspector.
They push past the other officers and immediately establish operational control of the situation. The relief inspector is de-facto overruled and the IRU officers take over the incident. The door gives and the shielded men form a shell around themselves, using three shields at the front and two sides, and one over the top. (What follows is a mixture of what I saw and heard from various sources. As such it is a fairly accurate account, but not all witnessed by my own eyes). The proceeding had taken about twenty five minutes. It was now 11.45.

[The man, a Scot in his mid thirties, was inside the flat, confronting the assembled riot shields. The plan, as training indicates, is for the shell to advance slowly against the assailant and trap him in a corner. From all accounts, the action passed off in text book manner. The man, armed with two knives, thrashing and threatening all the way, was cornered. The shielded officers pressed against him until he ceased to resist. The only thing that didn't go according to plan, so the sergeant said later, was that, once the man had ceased to resist and was in a heap on the floor, the men piled on top which he thought was "both excessive and dangerous". Further, it wasn't expected that the man would try and kill himself during the build up to the storming].

The man was escorted out, an officer holding each arm, which were handcuffed together. He seemed to have lost all desire to fight as he was led down the stairs to an awaiting van. He had slashed both wrists, losing a lot of blood in the process as the riot sheilds testified then, and the charge room floor later. His left hand was also cut up, probably as a result of smashing the...
window, and his face was badly gashed, presumably where Terry's truncheon had caught him.

Gradually all the vehicles left. I helped carry down the bloodied riot shields, loading them into the DSU. Outside in the forecourt, officers swopped details of the incidents. "I thought Terry and I were on for a commendation before the DSU arrived," Leslie lamented. "If he'd have come out first, that would have been it. I don't think us, with just truncheons, would have stood a chance with him with an iron bar".

The inspector stayed behind for a while to clear up the loose ends such as the securing of the property, finding the informant, and taking some statements. As he put it later, "I've got a lot of writing to do".

Back at the station, the man was being placed in an ambulance when I arrived. Four DSU men were going with him. The hospital refused to treat him as he was still being stroppy and was very drunk. He was, therefore, brought back and locked in a cell until he was more sober.

In the canteen, more stories were swopped. The general opinion of those present was that the DSU had performed well, bringing about a successful resolution to the incident. They look well pleased with themselves. "Yeah, but we cleared the ground for you. You had nothing left to do really", teased Leslie.

"What have you learnt from tonight?", somebody asked the sergeant. "The importance of training and discipline." He went on to criticise the relief inspector who he thought should have handed over immediate control to the DSU.

The above data both simultaneously supports and undermines the model. On the one hand, the level of forcefulness increases
incrementally throughout the incident until, eventually, control is established. However, due to the initial level of violence from the suspect, the role of the first officers on the scene is immediately one of containment, until back up arrives. Although the officers attempt to cajole and threaten the man out, it is met with an unequivocally violent response. In this situation, back-up is not needed as a symbolic extension of the officers' coercive potential, but as a practical one. Although the relief inspector takes overall control of the incident, he is mindful of the situational etiquette which prescribes the degrees of interference and non interference to which even senior officers adhere. Thus, he consults with the first officers on scene, listens to their advice and, primarily, uses his superior status to order the necessary hardware from the station.

However, this etiquette does not extend to other segments of the organisation who have an independent and autonomous command structure. Thus, when the DSU arrives, even though it was not requested, it presumes its right to intervene and take control of the incident. The DSU inspector de facto overruled the relief inspector and refused to accept his line of command. The most notable feature of this is that they make no attempt to establish the history of the incident. They have one goal, and one goal only, to place the man under police control. The nature of the offence, the wishes of the complainant and the ability of the other officers on scene to deal with the situation more successfully because they have greater knowledge of the build up, are all overridden by a taken-for-granted assumption that the immediate problem is control.

We have examined how police officers exercise power to establish and maintain control. By refusing to conflate the potential and actual use of force (as Bittner does), it is possible to argue empirically that it is not the capacity to use force which stands at the core of the police mandate but the capacity to exercise control.

Rather than conceptualising the police in terms of their right to use force, it is more profitable to see them as a
mechanism for authoritatively establishing control in the light of situational exigences. Although the right to use force is undoubtedly essential for the establishment of control, its exercise is rarely required and, to concentrate upon it, overshadows the far more routine and mundane aspects of how power is enacted.

When these are considered, then, it raises immediate problems as to how to interpret what Bittner means by "non-negotiably coercive force". While, in theory, the police may have that right, in practice, patrol officers consistently negotiate the quality and quantity of force necessary to establish control.

The model has provided a useful tool with which to conceptualise the manner in which control is achieved but, as it stands, it is clearly inadequate. I do not propose to rework it but it is necessary to point out its major weaknesses. It is apparent that the conceptualisation of escalation progressing in a sequential manner from the least to the most forceful response, does not adequately capture the dynamics of control. The data reveals three fundamental weaknesses in the model. First, officers move straight to high levels of forcefulness (Levels D and E) at the onset of some incidents if they have reason to believe that other strategies will not be appropriate. Second, while the model suggests that, once the level of forcefulness has increased it cannot decrease, the data shows otherwise. In actuality, once control has been established at one level, officers often resort to a lower, less forceful, level. The process is iterative rather than just linearly progressive. Finally, the model cannot accommodate the complexity of prolonged serious incidents which necessitate the involvement of other segments of the organisation.

However, the model has enabled us to examine the nuances of control. From the patrol officers' point of view, it is the sine qua non of police work. Without it, they cannot achieve any resolution of an incident.
Chapter Nine

RESOLUTIONS

The resolution to any incident police are called to deal with is comprised of two components: the "here-and-now" on the street and the "sometime-later" at the station.

The here-and-now relates to resolutions at the scene, whereby the immediate event is sufficiently dealt with so that it no longer requires the presence of police. The sometime-later resolutions follow on as a direct consequence of the here-and-now resolutions and relate to the organisational accounting procedures that must be performed in order to close the matter.

The organisational lifetime of an incident varies. Most incidents have a very short life span. For instance, a call comes in to the station that youths are causing a disturbance outside Joe's fish shop. A Panda car is dispatched and, when the officer arrives, the youths have gone. From an organisational point of view, as long as the incident is not repeated, when the patrol officer reports back with the words: "All quiet on arrival - Area search - No trace", the incident is, effectively, closed. On the other hand, some incidents may have a very long organisational life span. For instance, the shooting of Mrs. Cherry Groce by armed police officers in September 1985 was still requiring organisational attention 15 months later. (See Guardian, Jan 7, 1987; pl).

What is important to understand is that, although the here-and-now and the sometime-later are related, a resolution at one level does not necessarily entail a resolution at the other. An on-the-street resolution may not result in a satisfactory
organisational one, the paperwork may "bounce", a complaint may be made against the officer at a later date, and so forth. Nor does an organisational resolution imply that a satisfactory here-and-now resolution to the incident was obtained, only that the police withdrew. For instance, when officers are called to a dispute and leave the parties still arguing, with the words, "If we get a call back, someone's going to be arrested." (a phrase I have heard used on many an occasion) and then clear with the dispatcher, "Parties seen and advised. No offences alleged or disclosed.", a satisfactory organisational resolution has been achieved, regardless of what was, and probably still is, occurring at the actual incident.

For an organisational resolution to be achieved, it is necessary to "file" the correct paperwork. In some instances, this may involve extensive form filling, the taking of detailed statements and the writing of substantial reports. Generally, the most that is required is a short report and/or the filing of a simple pro-forma sheet. More usually, calls are resolved on the message pad which records any incoming calls and subsequent deployment from the station.

At the end of each shift, the sergeant or inspector will check to see that each dispatched message has an appropriate resolution. From their point of view, this is either a stock phrase indicating that the matter requires no further police attention, as with the words, "Area search - no trace" or "Parties seen and advised - no cause for police action". Alternatively, it will provide a reference to a further report which is filed in another part of the organisation. This will merely be a number which indicates where the report on the incident is located and is awaiting further action.

The patrol officer is, then, faced with two distinct, yet interrelated problems: how to resolve incidents on the street and how to resolve them organisationally.

There are, perhaps, four major constraints available to patrol officers which shape the type and nature of their resolutions. First, as we have already seen, the majority of
incidents to which officers are called bear only a tenuous relationship to their law enforcement function. Furthermore, even where incidents are related to law enforcement, such as a call to a burglary, the chance of a suspect still being on scene is remote. In most of these incidents, then, the police role is that of report taker, advice giver, comforter, mollifier, counsellor, and so forth. Resolutions are related more to successfully gathering enough information to satisfy any official forms and procedures that have to be completed, than to solving the actual problem.

Even where matters are of a criminal nature, a robbery, rape, burglary, car theft, and so on, the patrol officer is unlikely to play more than a minor part in the processing and eventual outcome of the incident. He will be expected to hand over control of the incident either to a higher ranking officer or to a specialist squad. Thus, his or her involvement in the incident will be, primarily, that of an information gatherer, a preserver of the scene, and a report writer. For instance, at a call to a reported burglary, once it is clear that the suspects are no longer in the vicinity, the patrol officer's task will be to gather information to ascertain whether there are enough "leads" to justify the devotion of specialist resources to its investigation. Once the patrol officer has left the scene and filed the correct paperwork, the incident is, effectively, no longer their concern.

However, it is not just the growth of organisational specialisation which limits the role of the patrol officer, it is the manner in which patrol work itself is organised that imposes limitations. Patrol officers are only on duty for eight hours a day and overtime will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Therefore, a resolution must either be reached by the end of the shift or the incident handed over to the oncoming officers. Officers are also expected to be "free" to deal with other incidents as and when they occur, so they are under pressure to complete many incidents quickly. This pressure is augmented by the informal understandings between
patrol officers and superiors as to the length of time it takes for an officer to deal with, what others view as, trivial affairs. If an officer exceeds the accepted norm, it will be taken either as a sign of incompetence or that they are avoiding work by pretending to be still dealing with an incident when they are, in fact, uncommitted.

Although, theoretically at least, patrol officers could, and sometimes do, try to postpone their resolution of incidents by taking a longer term view of a problem and, for example, promising future call backs and further personal investigations, the shift systems, the arbitrary designation of assignments, the haphazard and unpredictable workload all mitigate against the possibility of knowing when one will be able to return, thereby encouraging, once-and-for-all, a here-and-now resolution.

Finally, since the majority of the work is not crime related as such, it does not have any official place in the organisational scheme of accounting. It is hidden from view and, therefore, no credit is and, to a large degree, can be given for how it was performed since the organisation has no way of knowing. In practice, the only organisational interest shown is if something should go wrong. What this means is that, as long as a patrol officer achieves a here-and-now resolution that does not result in a call-back or a complaint and appropriately accounts for it in the brief organisational shorthand, that is the close of the incident. Lengthy and involved disputes, for instance, may involve patient and skilful handling by the officer in order to achieve even a temporary resolution enabling him to leave the scene reasonably confident that he will not be called back but, often, the only organisational record of his efforts will be: "Parties seen and advised." It is in this sense that the organisation makes apparent its own set of values, priorities and hierarchy of importance and so encourages the view that such work is not 'real police work' and can, thus, be accorded fewer resources.
With these constraints in mind, it is necessary to turn our attention to how patrol officers achieve a resolution of any incident. It is possible to break down the component processes that must be undergone and the attendant problems that must be solved into seven major tasks. First of all, an incident must be located. Second, those involved in the incident must orientate themselves to the officer's authority. Third, the officer has to determine the roles of the various parties. Fourth, officers must try and piece together what has happened or is happening. Fifth, they must decide what options are available to them in order to resolve the incident and what, in practice, they are actually going to do in order to achieve this resolution. Six, the officer has to terminate his or her involvement and then resolve the matter, both from a here-and-now and, finally, a sometime-later perspective.

**Location:** Obvious as it may be, officers have to locate an incident before they can deal with it. However, locating an incident presents officers with two distinct problems with regard to their competence. First, if they do not know where a particular address is located, and this is often a problem on large council estates with their anonymous blocks and graffiti covered maps, then, somehow, they will have to find out. Whilst, by far the easiest solution is to ask their colleagues over the PR or to ask the dispatcher to look it up on the station map, they are loathe to do so. All but the newest officers are supposed to have a developed local knowledge and to have to ask is an indication that one does not.

The problem of locating an incident is far more troublesome when no contact address is given and the information is vague, such as with a call to "Youths causing a disturbance on the Blandee Estate." Officers must then attempt to locate the youths who could be on any part of the estate. If they cannot be found, there are two courses available. The officers can request contact with the informant by eliciting an address from
the dispatcher or by asking the dispatcher to ring the informant and seek further information or they can ask the dispatcher to instruct the informant to make themselves known to the police. Alternatively, they can merely clear the call with the dispatcher with the words, "All clear on arrival - Area searched - No trace." The problem with choosing the second course of action rather than seeking out the informant is that the informant may call and ask for service again. This would then raise questions as to whether the incident had been satisfactorily dealt with by the officer in the first instance. Or, worse still, the informant my ring to complain that no service was delivered. Bearing this in mind, officers normally seek out the informant, even if it is just to show their faces and to promise future assistance if the need arises.

Control: Once an incident has been located, officers must ensure that the parties orientate themselves to their authority. Without this, they cannot effectively deal with the incident. Although we have dealt extensively with this topic in Chapter 8, it is worth remembering that the mere act of establishing control may result in an arrest which has little bearing on the original incident to which the police were called. (See the incident on page 74).

Role Determination: However, assuming that control is non-problematic or, at least, does not itself result in an arrest, the officer must then determine who is who in an incident and attribute a role to each party which orders them into police categories, e.g. informant, victim, witness, offender, suspect. Although this may seem relatively straightforward and, in many cases it is, there are enough situations where it is not to make it a problem. Even in the generally straightforward instance of a burglary report, it is necessary to ascertain whether the informant is actually the victim. They may be a neighbour or friend and, if this is not discovered from the onset, it will require the same ground to be
covered again with the right person. It becomes even more complex if the officer has reason to suspect that the informant of a burglary is actually the offender, for example, in cases of suspected insurance fraud or where people have robbed their own gas meters then reported the incident to the police in order to "cover themselves".

The designation of people into the relevant categories allows police to select the appropriate strategy for dealing with them. This is, perhaps, one reason why interpersonal disputes, particularly "domestics", are consistently cited as the most troublesome and disliked calls, since both parties are normally alleging a grievance and the officer has little "evidence" on which to cast his own judgement and select the relevant oppositional role terms, such as offender, victim, witness, suspect, and so on which would provide him with a set of appropriate actions and treatment for each party.

These problems are compounded when decisions have to be made very quickly and on the basis of limited information. For instance,

"The area car is dispatched to a "Suspects on Premises" call. We arrive quickly. The address relates to the fourth floor of an apartment block. Alan rushes up the first two flights, Paul and I close on his heels. From above, the sound of someone helterskeltering down the stairs can be heard. A scruffily dressed West Indian man in his late twenties hurtles round the corner. Alan tenses his body, ready to grab him. The man slows down. Alan checks himself and hurriedly asks the man if he has called the police. The man nods and explains that he thought that the sounds of Alan pounding up the stairs may have been the suspect returning..... When we left, Alan declared, "Cor, that was lucky. I nearly arrested him!"."

History: The fourth task, which is likely to be emeshed in the
third, is to try and ascertain what has happened or is happening. Has a burglary taken place? What, if anything, has been taken? Who is in dispute with whom? Over what? This process can be exceedingly complex and officers attempt to limit the information available to them to only that relevant to resolving the incident. For instance, consider this account of the rather short shrift a woman reporting domestic assault received from an officer:

A call comes over to attend a domestic assault. Reluctantly, and after some hesitation, Adam accepts the call. We arrive at the scene. Adam rings the door bell. A woman in her late twenties answers the door and beckons him into the dining-room, a neat and tidy room, if rather sparsely furnished. Dawn follows Adam in. The woman sits back down in an arm chair, Adam and Dawn stand. Adam asks her what happened. In a slow monosyllabic tone, the woman relates a complex and incoherent story involving an assault by an unknown assailant who, she is alleging, earlier in the day, broke into her house, tied her up and beat her. Adam listens to the story then points to the bottle of valium pills on the mantlepiece and coldly asks the woman: "How many of those have you taken today?". She remains silent. "Have you taken any of these this evening?"
"Yes, after it happened."
"Why didn't you ring us then?"
"I tried but it wouldn't work."
Adam leaves the room and tries the phone. "It's working now", he says as he returns.
"So, what happened this time?", he asks again, not having been able to make much sense of the woman's first answer. "Same as before", came the terse reply. "I haven't worked for three weeks 'cause of this, but I'm not going to make a complaint."
"Well, we might as well go then."
"Yes", she says flatly.
The PC spends a few more minutes trying to gather some more information about the incident.

"We'll be off then", he finally declares and we leave.

In this example, the officer has chosen to narrow his focus of concerns to a strictly legal interpretation of what has occurred. He had decided, from the outset, that the matter was unlikely to involve, what he considered, "real police work". Having said this, from the confused and incoherent story related by the woman, it was very difficult to discern what had actually happened and whether what had been reported was contemporary or historical, fact or fiction. For the officer, the truth value of what was being reported was at issue and, to support this interpretation, the valium and the fact that the telephone was working when the woman had said it was not, joined to give him sufficient doubt. The final factor in his decision was that the woman said she did not want to make a complaint, thus, in his mind, ending any necessity for police involvement.

Due to the difficulty in evaluating the truthfulness of other people's claims, officers are particularly concerned with evidence which supports these claims. The smashed window at the scene of a burglary, the cut lip of the person alleging assault, not only supply added weight to the person's claim, but they start to provide a framework which supports appropriate actions and resolutions.

Action: Establishing what has happened is a necessary component of deciding what, if anything, an officer can do about the incident, and then what it is he or she is actually going to do about it. Since discretion is an integral part of the patrol officer's job, there is normally a considerable disjunction between what the officer is legally allowed to do and what he or she discretionally decides to do. Whilst officers may have the legal power to arrest and charge, they are equally at liberty to warn offenders, threaten them and otherwise trade. For instance, in the example cited on page 213, the officer had
sufficient grounds for arrest on a charge of Drunk and Disorderly. However, he chose to only use the threat of the exercise of this power in order to secure a resolution. Had compliance not been achieved, then full legal powers could have been mustered. Or, consider the following example:

At 11 p.m. on a Saturday night, two officers are called to a dispute between a resident and some "guests" at a small social gathering, in the course of which the resident provides information which leads to the recovery of some stolen property and the identification of one of the "guests" as being responsible for the theft. The officers do not arrest the thief but arrange for her to be at a specific location at 10 o'clock the following morning for an "appointment" with the Home Beat.

In both these examples, the officers' decisions about what they can do, and what they actually do, are related. However, it is not only the situational features of the incident which are being called into play. In the example on page 213, if the officer had arrested the youth this would have tied him (and the van) up for several hours processing a relatively trivial offence and, therefore, preventing him from dealing with other incidents and providing back-up on, what looked as though it would be, a very busy shift. In the second example, the "thief" was a juvenile, known well to the officer, as was her address. To have arrested her would have resulted in either calling her parents out (and the officer thought they were unlikely to be home) or, alternatively, trying to locate a social worker to be present and vouch for her custody. At 11 p.m. on a Saturday night, the latter would have been very difficult. Since the girl could not be "processed" without the presence of either her parents or a social worker, then arresting her would have created problems for the station sergeant and may have not disposed him favourably towards the arresting officer.

What can be done and what is actually done are contingent
upon legal, situational and occupational criteria. But, quite clearly, the officer must also account for organisational factors. Thus, if a sergeant considers arrests for Drunk and Disorderly as improper use of discretion, preferring more informal methods, then the officer must choose whether to employ informal means in order to resolve the incident in the here-and-now or to risk antagonising the sergeant. Alternatively, he could find another charge to which the sergeant is more favourably inclined. Similarly, if an officer decides that a crime report is warranted at the scene of a burglary, then it is he or she who must make certain that they gather the relevant information to fill out the required forms and, thus, prevent the paperwork "coming back at them".

Termination: Having decided what is going to be done, the officer has to achieve a successful here-and-now withdrawal. This may be through arrest, the taking of a report, the promise of future assistance, and so on. Whatever the chosen means, they must enable the officer to leave the scene. What is important to understand is that, although the sometime-later resolution chronologically follows the here-and-now resolution, more often than not, in terms of police documentation, it proceeds it. That is to say, here-and-now decisions are taken in the light of the sometime-later account that will have to be produced at the station or, for instance, that the desk sergeant is anxious to "tidy up" his message pad before the end of his shift.

Police work is essentially bound up with trouble. The police are called to, and expected to deal with, a host of other people's troubles. Whether it be the reporting of a sudden death, arbitrating between disputants, or the taking of a burglary report, trouble is the "bread and butter" of police work. However, other people's troubles are not, necessarily, policing troubles which are rather different and relate to the occupational problems arising from performing patrol work, rather than as a direct consequence of the work itself. The
concern with trouble, I have argued, underscores the entire patrol task. It provides a vocabulary and grammar for ordering the police argot which results in, what I have called, the "terms of trouble" and it gives rise to a set of culturally valued strategies for trouble management and avoidance.

The concern with trouble creates the conditions under which the tensions between isolation and solidarity, autonomy and dependency are managed. Further, it allows officers to unpack and give meaning to the calls they receive and prioritise them in accordance with the relevancies of the occupational culture. On the street, it provides a framework for understanding how officers exercise power, authority and control and frames the various resolutions available to them. It is not that the concern with trouble and its avoidance is their only concern, it is however, one of the most important.
Introduction

Rather than present yet another methodological account in the "How I Did It?" tradition, I want to organise this discussion around the ethical implications arising from my fieldwork in the police setting. However it is necessary to provide the context first of all.

All the field work for this study was conducted between November 1983 and December 1984. There were four major blocks of fieldwork at three different research sites, two in the Metropolitan Police and one in the Surrey Constabulary. Over six hundred and twenty hours were spent accompanying more than sixty different officers on Patrol. In total, in excess of, one hundred days were spent in the field.

All the different functions of routine patrol were accompanied, including general foot patrol, Home Beat Patrol, and all car and van patrols. No restrictions were placed on whom I accompanied, as the research progressed at each site, and I got to know names and faces, I selected the officers whom I accompanied.

Access to the three research sites was negotiated through, and with the help of, the Police Foundation. Indeed, at the Surrey site I carried some work for them, on the understanding that I could use any data for my own purposes and that they would help facilitate access to the Met.

It would be nice to say that the research sites were choose for analytical criteria it would, however, be untrue. They were chosen on the basis that the Police Foundation had built up contacts with research minded individuals within the force who were prepared to accept my presence.

More by luck than design, then, the areas in which I worked provided a rich contrast. In Surrey the division, contained a
mixture of rural and urban. The town itself has the ethos of an affluent county town; a modern a well serviced shopping precinct, a busy and bustling high street and large detached houses with spacious and well tended gardens. Away from the town centre itself there are less salubrious pockets of low rise public authority housing.

The first London research site was a poor inner-city, racially mixed division, with a large concentration of public utility housing, much of it high rise. It contained all the ingredients of inner-city problems: poor housing; unemployment, particularly amongst the West Indian Youth; poverty and a high crime rate.

The second division, in contrast, was situated in a busy Central London shopping and commercial area with a small residential population swelled, during the day, by shoppers, tourists and business people.

I now want to move on and consider the methodology of this study more closely in the light of the recent debates concerning the ethics of fieldwork.

Ethics

There are three different responses to the ethical debate on fieldwork practice; the legalistic, the antinomian and the situational. (Fletcher 1966).

The legalists, at one extreme, present codes and inviolable rules (BSA, 1973; ASA, 1971; Bulmer, 1982), as a solution to the problem of ethical decision-making. Fieldwork methods in general, and covert observational research in particular, are placed under the microscope, dissected and then discarded as distasteful.

At the other extreme, the antinomians (Douglas, 1976; 1979) or
conflict methodologists, as Punch has termed them (Punch, 1986), reject all such stricture. The pursuit of knowledge, they argue, is an end in itself and must not be hampered by ethical codes and restrictions which, for the main part, have been erected by the powerful to protect themselves rather than the weak (Douglas, 1979).

Between these polarised positions there are an increasing number of accounts from practising fieldworkers which stress the complexity of ethical decisions faced by the researcher (Cf: Punch, 1986; Holdaway, 1983; Fielding, 1982; van Maanen, 1979). Collectively, these researchers have opted for a situational view of ethics. Following Fletcher, they argue that "the situationalist enters into every decision-making situation fully armed with the ethical maxims of his community and its heritage and treats them with respect as illuminators of his problem. Just the same as he is prepared in any situation to compromise them or set them aside in the situation..." (1966, p.17)

The Literature

I do not want to rehearse the arguments or add to the debate over the morality of observational research nor do I wish to consider the appropriateness of such a methodology. Instead, I want to focus on one issue of relevance to those engaged in observational fieldwork in general and with the police in particular. This can be summarised in the form of a single question: What should the researcher do when faced with a situation of police misconduct?

This question is not a marginal issue. A cursory examination of the literature suggests that occupational deviancy is an everyday factor of police life. (Cain, 1971 & 1979; Shearing, 1981; Punch, 1985; Rubinstein, 1973; PSI vol IV, 1983 ). In essence, the police researcher is presented with exactly the same problems as those studying other deviant or criminal groups.
(Klockars, 1975; Humphreys, 1970; Patricks, 1973; Rainwater & Pittman, 1967). To what extent does the researcher become personally involved with deviant activities? To what extent is one implicated by mere presence and does one's presence condone such activities? At what point does the researcher feel that their subjects' right to anonymity and confidentiality is overridden by other claims?

Although there is now a growing body of observational studies on the police, there are few accounts which describe how the studies were conducted and, in particular, how the ethical problems of the fieldwork were managed. Some studies do not discuss the issue at all (Rubinstein, 1973; Reuss-Ianni, 1983; Manning, 1977 & 1980), whilst others mention it merely to note its absence (Banton, 1964; Punch, 1979). Banton, for instance, writes: "I have not been able to study what happens in situations where policemen are subject to strain and provocation and can say little about the sorts of incidents that attract newspaper publicity." (1964, p.xii).

Those who do write about the problem and the personal distress undergone by the researcher do not necessarily say how they resolved the ethical dilemma (Westley, 1940; Catterton, 1978; van Maanen, 1974 & 1977). Hence van Maanen notes: "There were, for example, moments during my study when disgust does not begin to describe what the police made me feel as I saw people thrown through windows, kicked to the ground and dogs put on them, or terrified beyond belief by a gun placed to their heads" (1981, p491). A few researchers, however, actually discuss both the cases and the reasoning behind their decisions (Ericson, 1981 & 1982; PSI. vol. IV, 1983; Holdaway; 1983).

There are three reasons why such information is important. First, without it, it is impossible to judge to what degree authors are practising self censorship. For instance, has key data been "lost", perhaps it was not written up due to the fear
of subpoena or the feelings of betrayal it caused?

Second, unless one knows the constraints under which the researchers were operating and the degree of penetration they had gained within the organisation, it is difficult to assess the reliability of the findings. For instance, if we have a field work account which documents neither police use of violence nor how the field work was carried out, it is impossible to decide whether the researcher has been duped and systematically excluded from various settings or whether no misconduct took place.

Third, in the absence of honest accounts as to how the fieldwork was conducted, the novice researcher is continually faced with the problem of having to re-invent the wheel. As van Maanen has rightly suggested: "The best advice I could offer to a researcher just entering a police system would be precisely the same were he a recruit: simply keep quiet and to himself virtually everything he hears and sees during his early days in the field." (van Maanen, 1978, p 341) Yet there comes a point when the early days have passed and, if one is doing one's job well, the backstage is made accessible. The researcher may then become party to events which pose serious dilemmas, both professional and personal.

In addressing these issues I do not want to fall into the trap of offering moral prescription or, conversely, to abandon ethical reasoning to the simplistic rhetoric of "Whose side are we on?" (Becker, 1963). Rather, I take Punch's argument seriously that "ideally, every fieldworker should be his or her own moralist" (1986, p73) and concur with Holdaway that "in the end it is the individual researcher who will make the decision, accepting the risks involved. There is much truth in Whyte's remark that they will have to live with the decision - and continue to do so." (Holdaway, 1982, p79).
The problem with the situationalists’ approach, however, is that, while codes require that the specifics are reducible to generalities, the situationalists run the risk of making every situation unique and, therefore, irreducible to any form of generality. There is a danger that this will lead to an inability to conduct any meaningful debate as to how we should ethically proceed with our work. Punch's solution that "we should rely on "commonsense ....academic convention and peer control through discussion" as these approaches are "more likely to promote understanding of the issues and compliance with them", (Punch, 1986, p83) does not seem a very satisfactory answer. Commonsense is a remarkably elusive concept and, as I have stated, academics are by no means in agreement on the key issues. Furthermore, given the nature of such research, often conducted by lone graduate students, peer control is likely to be remote and after the event. In fact, having argued against codes and strictures as inappropriate in practice, Punch suggests that they are useful in cueing the researcher to the potential pitfalls and problems that he or she is likely to encounter. It is almost as though bad advice is better than no advice.

In this paper I seek to ground situational ethics on a firmer foundation. I shall start with a general discussion as to how I constructed an observer-as-participant role in a police setting and to go on to focus on three particular issues which bear most heavily on ethical decision-making. These can be discussed under three headings: informed consent, the invasion of privacy and trust and deceit. I then want to consider one specific incident which raises the central dilemmas a field-worker might face. Finally, I want to consider what choices are available to the fieldworker and to suggest how dilemmas can be most appropriately resolved.

The construction of a research role
The aim of my research was both to describe and elucidate the practice of policing from the perspective of the street level officer. Accordingly, my attention was drawn to the occupational culture of the lower ranks, the shared values and norms that surround their work and the formal and informal work practices which, together, constitute the patrol officers' work world. Two types of data were viewed as salient. First, incidents of naturally occurring inter-officer talk which, in comparison with accounts generated for the researcher's benefit, say far more about the shared value system of police officers. Second, detailed descriptions of how officers handled "live" incidents. No notes were written in the field, as it was felt that this would be overly intrusive, and create barriers to the building up of trust with those I was accompanying. All fieldnotes were written up within twenty-four hours of the end of each shift. They are, therefore, only as accurate as memory and ear allow.

An observer-as-participant role was chosen as the only practical research methodology which would provide the necessary data for such an analysis.

As Becker has written:

"The participant observer gathers data by participating in the daily life of the group or organisation he studies. He watches the people he is studying to see what situations they ordinarily meet and how they behave in them. He enters into conversation with some or all of the participants in these situations and discovers their interpretations of the events he has observed. (Becker, 1970, p25)

This definition broadly serves to describe how I set about studying the police. For example, I went out on routine patrol,
both on foot and in cars; I sat in the station office and made tea for the shift; I helped chase suspects and, at times, arrest them; counselled the distraught and administered first aid to attempted suicide victims. I have felt a sense of relief when we have slipped out of the cold into a warm tea hole and shared the fear, humour, and boredom that are part of the everyday lives of police officers.

Yet Becker's definition also tends to obscure the variations inherent in the role. Pearsall has pointed out that "participant observation" is a master term which covers a continuum from complete participant to complete observer (Pearsall, 1970, p341). Unlike participant observation of other social or occupational groups, there are legal limits defining the extent to which one can become a complete participant in the police organisation. As van Maanen has noted, this has led to most research on the police being carried out from the position of the "fan". (Van Mannen, 1979, p 344). This corresponds to Pearsall's "participant-as-observer" role. See diagram below.

---

Active

| Spy | Member |

Covert

| Voyeur | Fan |

Passive

---

Pure Types of Participant-Observer Role
(Adapted from Van Maanen, 1978 p344)
As I have illustrated on van Maanens typology, my predominant research role was also that of the "fan". But there is always movement between roles. When I deliberately placed myself in a position to overhear private conversations between officers I felt like a "voyeur"; when I excused myself to the toilet, hurriedly to scribble down notes, I felt like the spy but when I was attending incidents on the street, passively listening and watching, I was the "fan". However, when I was left guarding a prisoner, introduced as a fellow police officer or helping in the arrest of a violent and hysterical drug user, I was, for all intents and purposes, cast in the role of a police officer. As van Maanen points out short of wearing a sign, "there is no way for the field-worker to be sure that his research role in the organisation is in fact the role that the others are responding to." (1979,346)

The ethics of the research role

In the diagram below I show how the research role that I constructed undermined many standard ethical considerations. It is to an examination of how and to what extent I broke the rules that I now wish to turn.
The Degree to which the research complied or contravened with standard ethical considerations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICE</th>
<th>PUBLIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Was the principle of informed consent adhered to</td>
<td>Theoretically Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practically No</td>
<td>Sometimes Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were the research subjects' right to privacy undermined</td>
<td>Generally No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were the research subjects deceived by the researcher</td>
<td>Generally No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Informed consent

Adherence to the principle of informed consent implies that two major conditions are met: First, that the research subjects are made aware of and understand the nature and purposes of the research; second, that, from a position of knowledge, they can freely give their consent to participating in the research.

The explanations which one constructs for one's research are always conditional upon the audience which one is addressing. This is especially true when carrying out an ethnographic study where one has only a vague sense of what one is looking for. I, like others, constructed an account of my work which was serviceable as the following extract from my field work illustrates:

This has become my standard explanatory patter. "Well,
what I'm trying to do is to develop collections of different types of incidents such as "street stops", "domestics", "fights" etc. then, at some point, I'll have to sit down and analyse them." This often elicits the question "Do you write it all up then?" "Yes, I tend to spend about as long writing as I do in the field." I stress how arduous this is and that my tutor wants to see all my field notes which means that they've got to be good to keep him happy. Then I talk about the analysis and say, "Perhaps I'll break them down into just incident types or, it may be more interesting, say, to develop collections of 'hostility', 'resistance' etc., regardless of what the incidents are. In this way one can start to see the patterns which are emerging."

Such accounts are not untrue but they are veiled. They construct the research role so as to make it understandable and acceptable to the subjects. When pressed, the veil becomes more transparent. For instance, early on in the research a young sergeant joined the table in the canteen where I was having dinner.

......I felt that I was being interrogated and set up to make a wrong footing so I could be felled - which nearly happened with the next question. "What are you going to do if, in your opinion, you see the excessive use of force?".

"Well, I'll cross that bridge when I come to it but I'd be interested in explaining why it happened". At this point Mark came in "You were at the pub fight the other night - and a couple of people got hit - did you think that that was an excessive use of force?" I could have done with out this side quip. (I did think the use of force had been excessive). Rather than answer directly I taked about how gory it had been when we had first arrived and said that one of the things that struck a
was how arbitrary the arrests had been. "If you gave a bit of lip you were liable to be nicked and roughly handled." At this point, much to my relief, the sergeant got called away and the conversation broke off.

This was how I explained the nature of my research to the officers with whom I had to work closely. I would also constantly reiterate that nothing I saw or heard would be reported back to senior officers or colleagues and that I granted everyone anonymity. In addition to this, I tried to give officers a chance to refuse working with me. For example, when I first introduced myself to the reliefs, I would state publically, "If any officer does not want me to accompany them that's fine. They just have to say. I don't want to accompany anybody who doesn't want me along and if you want me to stay out of a particular incident just say." Oddly, this first issue was never a problem. Perhaps they all thought like one of my informants who stated:

"As far as I'm concerned when you're with me you can come to anything. I suppose I think, if he's prepared to come to -------- then it's up to him".

The last issue was, however, more problematic. When sergeants assigned me to specific officers it is difficult to know whether having me along constituted an order. This is particularly the case with probationers who may have felt that to raise an objection to my presence would put them in a bad light with their sergeants or inspectors. But, as the study progressed, this became much less of an issue. People would ask me if I wanted to ride with them and, if I was in the canteen when a good call came out, would often come and find me to see if I wanted to attend.

If the principle of informed consent was fudged in terms of the police, it was completely disregarded for the public. I made no
attempt to seek the permission of the public with whom I daily came in to contact in my role as a researcher. This was a purely pragmatic decision. When I arrived at the scene of a fight, for instance, to suddenly declare to all those present that I was a researcher would have been impossible. However, such incidents are the exception rather than the rule and in many routine stops, domestic disputes, etc., it would have been possible to state the purpose of my presence. Nevertheless, I decided that to do so would be to create problems of "observer effect". I thought that people might play up to the presence of the researcher or, worse still, might try and get me to act as a witness and give testimony against officers in cases of possible wrong doing. If this did happen I would be breaking the promise of anonymity which I had given to the officers whom I accompanied. As a rule, I remained silent about my role and let people presume what they wanted.

However, although I did not declare the nature of my role occasionally this was done by police officers. Often they would ask me on our first meeting how I would like to be introduced and I would reply with my stock formula, "It's very much up to you. If you want to say, 'This is Mr. Norris from the University of Surrey engaged in a research project.', that's fine. But, if it's a bit tricky the last thing you want is for someone to start playing up to me so I'll leave up it to you". In consequence, I have been introduced as Special Branch, C.I.D., the Investigating Officer, Plain Clothes or simply as a colleague. However, in most situations I was not introduced at all. In general, the more relaxed and friendly a situation, the more likely it was that I would be introduced as a researcher. Whereas, in more hostile or tricky ones I might be introduced as a police officer.

Privacy
The foregoing raises a number of issues other than those relating to informed consent. As Bulmer has written, "To insinuate oneself into a particular setting on false pretenses in order to gather material for research violates the rights of the individual to be let alone, to control his personal space and information about himself." (1982, p219)

Both by default and design, the public often believed or were led to believe that I was a police officer. Under such pretences, I entered their houses and witnessed the most private of scenes; a husband and wife quarrel, a woman reporting she had just been raped, or an attempted suicide victim semi-conscious and covered in blood. And, in spite of the fact that they were providing core data for my thesis, they were not granted the right to control information about themselves.

Furthermore, this invasion of privacy extended from the public to the police. Although the police were aware of my research in the terms that I had constructed for them, I became party to private information about people's domestic lives, their marital problems, their divorces and so forth. Although much of this information was never recorded, occasionally it provided useful insight into the nature of the job and the constraints of being a police officer.

Deceit and trust

The practice of participant observation is, inevitably, interactionally deceitful. The researcher has to cultivate informants and lessen the distance between themselves and those they are studying. In this sense, one's aims are to make the research role invisible in the field and to emphasis similarity at the expense of difference. For instance, I would dress in the same manner as the in-house C.I.D. style; grey flannels, blue blazer, white shirt and
formal tie. In this way, officers who did not know of my research role often took me for another C.I.D. officer. But this deception would move from the accoutrement of my projected image to areas nearer to self, especially language. As I became familiar with the police argot I would use police talk to indicate a sense of shared perspective. For example, after I had just started work in a different station for purposes of comparison:

Other PCs had joined the table and gradually the conversation turned into a joint interview - the whole relief interviewing me. "Has your opinion changed since you've been doing this job? You've been in you must have seen a lot there."
"Yeah, I used to think that you were a bunch of fascist pigs!" I quipped light heartedly.
"We are", he replied with a smile.
"Oh I know that - you know the only time I'd ever come in to contact with the police before starting this was being stopped on the way home, late at night. I thought you were a pain but nothing else really. I used to think, probably from watching too many American Cop shows, that it was all crime stuff. But it's not like that is it? You know, all the 'rubbish', 'domestics', 'process' - that changed my opinion."
"Do you see our side now, see us as people? What do you say when people ask you what you think of us?"
"I tell them about the work, what it's like - you know, you go into a situation with bottles flying - a pub fight. It's rough and tough in somewhere like . Perhaps the police go in a bit strong but then, I think, what would I do? If you've got to deal with it quickly you just get people out and ask questions later".

This sort of question and answer game went on for about
twenty minutes. "Has this changed you? I was listening to you and you sound just like a policeman, using all the words." intervened one of the older PCs.

"Yeah, my friends say that, 'You're getting more and more like a policeman every day' - I've got more cynical".

This strategy certainly seemed to pay off. Generally, my face is now known and, in specific terms, as I walked into the front office later that evening, a PC came up to me immediately and said, "If Andy's not going out for a bit why don't you come and see how the front desk works?" Two nights later I was invited to a goodbye drink for one of WPCs who was leaving the relief. It was held in the station, at 4am, when everyone should have been on duty.

As Punch has rightly questioned (1986 p72) "...if the latent aim of the field worker is to create trust then what is the aim of that trust?" The concept of trust implies mutuality of interest and an equality of dependancy. To a major degree, this is inherently absent in the fieldworker role and, therefore has to be manufactured. In the police setting this is even more apparent since, as many commentators have noted, police officers are very reluctant to share information with each other, let alone outsiders (Ericson, 1982; Chibnal, 1977; Bittner, 1970; Rubinstein, 1973; Manning, 1977 & 1980).

However, the manufacture of trust requires getting one's hands dirty since it is not something that can be promised with declarations of confidentiality and anonymity. These are distant and far-off concepts. Trust in the police world is more common-place and mundane. Trust is about keeping your mouth shut when others are being called to account. It is about not letting slip in front of senior officers that you were not where you were supposed to be. Trust is an action, often marked by
absence rather than presence. As such, it involves "not doing" rather than "doing". It is gained and earned, shown in the day-to-day realities of the police world and, as such, it cannot be promised. It has to be displayed and, only after it has been seen to exist, will it be assumed. Until then all promises are empty.

Nonetheless, there were times when the dependance was mutual and such mutuality created a bond of personal friendship and loyalty which did not fit easily into the general notions of professional ethics.

An officer asked me to indicate to him when the road was clear so he could pull out onto a particularly busy road. I made a mistake and the consequence was that the police van collided with an oncoming car. Thankfully the driver was well disposed to the police and unconcerned with the damage to his company car which, although quite serious was hardly noticable. The matter was effectively forgotten. However, in so doing, the officer was guilty of committing two offences: failure to report damage to a police vehicle and, more importantly, failure to report an accident. Had he reported the accident, I would have felt obliged to have taken a major proportion of the blame which would have, undoubtedly, threatened my continuing research role. By staying silent he was protecting me and laying himself open to more serious charges.

Like policework, fieldwork is not a polite occupation. I promised people anonymity, put officers at their ease with all the interactional devices at my command and let them know that I understood that police work was not always performed according to the rules and that I wanted to see how it was really done. In both word and deed I indicated that I could be trusted not to report back misconduct that I witnessed to
senior officers or to their peers. Having done all this, I undoubtedly got what I deserved - a case of 'I've made my own bed now I've got to lie in it.'

The Dilemma

I want to illustrate some of the possible consequences and dilemmas a researcher may face once intimate access has been obtained. I refer the reader here to the incident reported on page 122ff of the thesis.

For me, this incident posed, in very explicit terms, a serious dilemma. To what extent did my duty as a citizen override my duty as a researcher? Here we had an individual, who had been the recipient of the gross misuse of force and, rather than being compensated for such, was liable to bear the brunt of his own misfortune by having false charges laid against him. True, he was not blameless. However, if it should reach court, he would be liable to receive a heavier penalty and perhaps go to prison on the basis of false evidence.

The solution

Perhaps the most accurate account of how I decided to deal with this incident comes from my field log the following day.

I was apprehensive about going in tonight. Last night's events have left me confused and a little paranoid. Fear, violence, emotion, disgust have all mingled.... When the two prisoners went beserk I felt the rush of adrenaline, smelt fear and then anger and sensed the inevitability of the events that followed. I felt frightened by the thought that I had witnessed what I should not have seen. Would I be called to account? What would I say? Would I now be frozen out as being
potentially too dangerous to have around anymore? How much did they think I could be relied on not to spill the beans? - Whose side was I on?

Such thoughts went through my mind as I boarded my bus - Was it wise to go in at all? In fact, I let two buses go past. But I had decided that the most important thing was to be seen, to be part of the process, to be in view, to be one of them, to be normal and go to work and carry on as though nothing had happened. If such a ploy were successful then, hopefully, it would facilitate an even greater depth to my access. I would have demonstrated that I could be trusted.

My immediate response, although recognising the dilemma, was to opt for the solution of "business as usual". However, on reflection, it seems to me that I was faced with two distinct decisions:

What I should do in the short term:

- unofficially report their actions to a senior officer
- officially lodge a complaint
- go for the expose mode, publishing quickly and damningly
- abandon the study

And in the long term:

- neither write up nor publish
- write it up and use the data like any other, in other words, to publish normally

The long and the short term solutions are heavily dependant on each other as are the consequences that flow from each. It is to an examination of these consequences that I now turn.
The consequences

A serious problem in making a decision arose from the fact that I had no guidance as to how to do so. The literature, as I have already noted, offered little advice. If the literature was not much help neither were my professional colleagues (in whom Punch places so much faith). In the months that followed I discussed this incident with over half a dozen senior British and American police researchers (to whom I grant the same anonymity as to my research subjects). I received the following advice.

I should:

- have immediately reported the action to a higher ranking authority
- have lodged an official complaint
- have done nothing but, if called to a discipline hearing, lie on behalf of my police contacts and therefore establish greater legitimacy in their eyes
- refrain from publishing such material as it is "unhelpful"
- have reminded all those involved at the incident that a researcher was present and thus allowed them the chance to alter their behaviour in that light

Although I have my quibbles with these responses each one has some merit. However, this advice was given with the benefit of hindsight and from the luxury of not being personally compromised. Furthermore, it is clearly contradictory and this seems to encapsulate the dilemma — if I satisfied one ethical maxim I was guilty of abandoning another.

The complexity of this balancing act can be conceived as arising
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<tr>
<th>Unofficially report actions</th>
<th>Have to leave the field</th>
<th>Will you spoil the field</th>
<th>Are you guilty of manipulating the data</th>
<th>Do you break your promise of confidentiality and anonymity</th>
<th>Is there a high possibility of being subpoenaed</th>
<th>Do you cause direct harm to the research subjects</th>
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<tr>
<td>officially lodge a compliant</td>
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<td>publish quickly and damningly</td>
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<td>don't write up or publish</td>
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from the contradictory binds ensnaring the researcher. In any research relationship a matrix can be drawn which illustrates these competing pressures. (See Ethics Matrix One above.) The horizontal axis indicates those factors which should be considered when making a decision. On the vertical axis are the six major alternatives with which I was faced. Reading from left to right, it is possible to see the consequences of a particular choice with regard to the major ethical considerations. What weight is given to the various factors is always situationally contingent upon the researcher own research bargains and their personal evaluation of each factor. The matrix cannot, therefore be filled in in advance of the study.

In my own case I have indicated the effects of various types of action on the research bargains I made at the time of the study. I have included a tally at the end which, at a glance, lists the overall consequence of a course of action. The more "NO's" there are, the fewer canons broken. This is not to suggest that each consideration has equal weight. Only the individual researcher can decide that. The Ethics Matrix below has been completed to reflect how, given my research role, I weighted various courses of action. Others, of course, may fill it in differently. What becomes immediately apparent is that, in my case, certain courses of action would have had quantitatively more negative effects than others.

Broadly speaking, the most negative actions would be the official or unofficial reporting of the officers and the expose mode. Both lay me open to charges from all quarters about the nature of the research role. Informed consent, anonymity and protecting my research subjects are all sacrificed. My public conscience may have been satisfied but the contract with the researched has been competely abandoned.

By not writing up or publishing, my research subjects are given
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you cause a physical or psychological harm to others?</td>
<td>Are you guilty of your offense?</td>
<td>Do you break the law more often?</td>
<td>Are you violent?</td>
<td>Do you feel the social consequences of your actions?</td>
<td>Does it improve your strained relationship with parents?</td>
<td>Do you believe you are part of a group?</td>
<td>Do you consider your group to be part of a larger organization?</td>
<td>Do you feel you are part of a group?</td>
<td>Do you believe you are part of a larger organization?</td>
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**Notes:**

- Question 1: Do you cause a physical or psychological harm to others?
- Question 2: Are you guilty of your offense?
- Question 3: Do you break the law more often?
- Question 4: Are you violent?
- Question 5: Do you feel the social consequences of your actions?
- Question 6: Does it improve your strained relationship with parents?
- Question 7: Do you believe you are part of a group?
- Question 8: Do you consider your group to be part of a larger organization?
- Question 9: Do you feel you are part of a group?
- Question 10: Do you believe you are part of a larger organization?
the highest protection. However, I am fullfilling neither my responsibility to present undistorted findings nor my public conscience.

Similarly, abandoning the study protects the research subjects but leaves public conscience and my duty to my sponsors unsatisfied and is, essentially, self censorship.

The decision I most favour is to publish normally. This means, in the short term, one does not report the actions and, therefore, leaves public conscience unsatisfied but breaks no research agreements and is true to the aims of the original enterprise.

Conclusion

As I have argued, fieldwork methods can, and do, lead the researcher in to a quagmire of ethical considerations. Inevitably one is faced with contradictory and competing choices and it is impossible to satisfy them all. However, whilst acknowledging each situation as different and that individual conscience has its own parameters, there are some issues that have to be faced by all field workers. The purpose of the Ethics Matrix is to make those issues apparent and to act as a heuristic device in revealing the complex ramifications of any chosen course. If, by utilising such a device, we escape from simplistic solutions and trite codes, so much the better. We may never be able to agree on what constitutes the right decision in a particular case but we can insist that researchers consider the consequences of their actions and are publically prepared to defend their own choice.


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