Law Enforcement Training: Changes and Challenges

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Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce students to some of the challenges confronting law enforcement training, especially in light of some recent trends in policing. The chapter is premised on a presupposition: reciprocal relationships exist among society, policing, and law enforcement training. As society changes, policing adjusts; as policing changes, training shifts. With a lot of careful effort and a little luck, the new training will improve policing so that society is better served.

American policing has gone through three recognizable eras (Kelling and Moore 1988). The political era, which lasted through the early 20th century, was characterized by officers who walked on foot and knew citizens well. Officers had unlimited discretion and limited supervision which led to widespread allegations of corruption and other abuses of power. The reform era became dominant in the 20th century when society reacted strongly against that corruption. The reforms resulted in police agencies that were bureaucratic, legalistic organizational structures with strict policies and procedures to limit officer discretion and enhance supervision. Technological advances placed officers in patrol cars with radio dispatch so that they could respond to calls for service quickly and efficiently. The relationship of the police to communities suffered as officers were removed from foot patrols, and officers policed from a distance. Riots and racial conflict during the 1960's eventually led to the community era in an effort to improve police-community relations. Heightened concerns for the community and problem solving merged in community-oriented policing (COPS) (see Kelling and Moore 1988). By 1997, most police departments serving 100,000 or more people and sheriff's offices

serving 250,000 or more residents had personnel assigned to COPS (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2000).

We are still in the transition from the reform era to the community era. Training, in particular, has been slow to adapt to community policing (or COPS). The transition is especially difficult given the conflicting values and practices between traditional (or reform) policing and current policing. For example, while traditional policing emphasizes strict enforcement of the law, COPS emphasizes building relationships between police and community/neighborhood residents in order to work together to prevent crime and solve problems (Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux 1990). Without proper training, officers will be less likely to understand the philosophy of COPS and how to translate the philosophy into effective practice (King and Lab 2000).

Training has also evolved. In the political era, officers often learned how to police from senior personnel in the department because no formal training was required. Systematic recruit training in police academies was one of the reforms instituted during the 20th century. August Vollmer, a pioneering police leader and scholar, is credited with introducing education to policing. In Berkeley, California, he recruited college graduates to law enforcement and publicized the importance of doing so. This led to increased emphases on recruit training and education nationwide. The trend was slow to catch on, however. As recently as 1965, only approximately 15% of police departments provided or required training. In 1967, The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice published its *Task Force Report on the Police,* which called for states to establish minimum selection, training, and education standards for all law

enforcement personnel. States now certify law enforcement officers who pass standardized examinations.

Although recruit training in special academies is typical, training requirements are determined by each state (Marion 1998) and are not uniform. Training data from the 430 largest U.S. municipal police departments in 1993 showed that wide variation in practice remained—some departments required no hours of training while others required over 2500 hours (Alpert and Dunham 1997; Department of Justice 1993).

Training can occur for recruits who are entering law enforcement (often referred to as basic training), for rookies (field training officer or FTO programs), and for existing officers and administrators through advanced and in-service training. Training can also occur through traditional academic degree programs. Recruit training is generally performed in designated facilities that are referred to in different ways (e.g., training academies, institutes of public safety, criminal justice training centers). Some large law enforcement agencies operate their own academies and pay for the training of their recruits. More often training centers are linked with institutions of higher education, especially those geared toward vocational training like community colleges. Law enforcement agencies will sometimes sponsor their recruits as they go through training at the local community college training center. Other prospective officers pay for their own training in hopes of being recruited after they complete training and become certified.

Training Challenges

The function of law enforcement training, whether geared toward traditional policing or COPS, seems obvious. Training should improve performance. What is less

obvious is how do accomplish this. The challenge is double edged in several important ways.

1. Curriculum and Delivery Challenges

Police training is double-edged in that it needs to impart skills (e.g., driving, use of weapons, defensive tactics, report writing, arrest techniques, first aid and first response techniques) and knowledge bases (e.g., law, race relations, interpersonal communication, mental illness, drug and alcohol effects, terrorism) (Marion 1998). As society changes, training will change. New topics will be added and/or the coverage of topics will change. For example, Florida now requires 40 hours of in-service diversity training for sworn officers every four years.

The majority of traditional police recruit training consists of the technical and mechanical aspects of acquiring skills (Birzer 1999) due to concerns about safety. Recruits spend 90% of their training time on firearms, driving, first aid, self-defense and other use-of-force tactics even though only 10% of their job duties will put them in positions where they need to use these skills (Germann 1969; Mayhall et al. 1995). Veteran officers—police insiders—frequently are the instructors for skills training. They may also be "drafted" to cover academic subjects like diversity and communications, areas that may stretch their expertise. "Subject matter experts" from law enforcement ranks are also frequently used for in-service training.

Some jurisdictions base their basic or recruit training on a Job Task Analysis (JTA). The reason for this is to ensure that training reflects the demands of the job. However, JTA reflects what has traditionally been done on the job and not necessarily what needs to be learned to do the job better.

The shift in policing toward community relations, problem solving, and COPS heightens the need for improved knowledge bases and additional skills but does not diminish the need for traditional skills (Bradford and Pynes 1999; Buerger et al. 1999). For example, recruits would be ill served if training in officer safety were short changed. COPS training augments the curriculum by including topics on human diversity, special populations (such as the elderly, mentally ill), "assessing situations," public speaking, ethics and integrity, proactive or "coactive" problem solving, crime prevention, stress management, domestic violence, and community building (see Palmiotto et al. 2000). Recent developments in policing lead to more training and education in a wider range of knowledge. Those knowledge bases require more reliance on expertise that lies outside of law enforcement. Given the limited time for training, skills areas and knowledge bases compete for priority. As policing changes, either training priorities shift or training hours are increased. For example, some curricula, in the aftermath of September 11, incorporate lessons on weapons of mass destruction and terrorism.

The various types of curriculum content have implications for how instruction is delivered. A vocational, hands-on model seems more appropriate for teaching and enhancing skills than for imparting and developing the knowledge bases, which usually are pursued via academic materials and classroom instruction.

Traditional training in subject areas like law and communications builds on the pedagogical approach used when teaching children. The pedagogy is teacher-centered and structured, and it relies heavily on a lecture format (often referred to by trainees as "talking heads"). This style emphasizes mastery, obedience and discipline, and supports the narrow focus on law enforcement that characterizes traditional policing. One

challenge facing training is to incorporate alternative learning models more suited for adults (Birzer 2003, Glenn et al. 2003).

Training for COPS can be more effective if it uses adult learning or andragogy. Andragogy centers on the learner rather than the instructor and emphasizes interactions and integrates life experiences into training (Birzer 2003; Knowles 1980). The instructor takes on the role of "facilitator" and helps to develop critical thinking, judgment and creativity in the learner (Birzer and Tannehill 2001). Andragogy is based on "empowerment" and teaches recruits to be self-directed and to work through problems to solve them. This approach runs counter to the quasi-military top-down style that predominates in traditional policing.

2. Occupational Socialization, Recruitment Challenges, and Informal Lessons

Post-secondary education and occupational training are forms of secondary socialization. Several police scholars have investigated the occupational socialization process. We will focus on the first two stages that Van Maanen (1973) uses to characterize the process: choice/pre-entry (which includes self selection and screening by agencies) and introduction (which includes both formal and informal lessons at the training academy).

The pre-entry stage (also known as "anticipatory," Bennett 1984) occurs prior to starting the academy. In this stage, applicants begin to view themselves in the police role based on real or imagined perceptions (via media, friends, relatives, and police officers that they know or have had contact with). Academy instructors must work with the skills, knowledge, and values that the recruits bring with them to the academy (Bennett 1984; Van Maanen 1973). In other words, training is double edged in that it is not independent

of other trends both in and out of policing. Recruits self-select, while agencies and academies screen. People most interested in law enforcement have historically not been the "best" students in traditional classrooms. They are probably attracted to police training because they want to hone their skills in driving, shooting, and defensive tactics more than acquire knowledge about crime causation, diversity, and law. Agencies and academies that are looking for new recruits target announcements and advertising in ways that encourage certain types of applicants. Applications to both academies and agencies can contain questions to screen who is selected. Historically, recruits were selected based on physical attributes (height, weight, strength). Military service has been a recruitment focus since Peele's original police force.

To the extent that COPS emphasizes different activities, recruitment may need to change to screen for different skills and characteristics. Trends in society, however, may constrict the pool of candidates. Retirements, economic fluctuations, pay scales, the juvenile and drug records of young people, and the war against terrorism conjoin to affect the supply of potential recruits and the demand for them. When the recruit pool is limited, training has to adjust to teach at the level of the recruits-- even if that means pitching the material at the 8th grade level. As policing develops and requires more professionalism and deeper knowledge of a broader array of subjects, training demands may outstrip the abilities of many potential recruits.

During the introduction stage of police socialization, recruits are exposed to a mix of formal (official) and informal lessons—and the two kinds of lessons are not necessarily complementary. Recruits receive formal instruction in the training curriculum; they are taught about departmental rules and regulations and other

fundamentals (Lundman 1980). They also receive informal training in the attitudes and beliefs about the occupation through war stories and experiencing the quasi-military authority arrangements (see Langworthy and Travis 2003; Van Maanen 1973). Recruits learn roles, attitudes, and beliefs from training staff, experienced officers, and peers at the academy.

Newcomers to all organizations will identify with the work group to some degree. Observers argue that few organizations instill the same degree of occupational identification as do the police (Britz 1997; Van Maanen 1978). Skolnick (1966) reports that the strength of the organizational culture in a police department is so salient that, regardless of personal differences, individuals adopt the beliefs and definitions of the department. In the academy, the recruits learn that their peer group will support them and that they should support their fellow officers.

What is learned informally may not comport with the formal training instruction. We should expect a gap between formal and informal lessons (just like we can expect a gap between law on the books that recruits learn and law as it is practiced on the streets). Indeed, some lessons may be contradictory. For example, despite formal instruction in diversity, informal lessons may be sexist or racist (Marion 1998). While such contradictory informal messages are detrimental to traditional policing, they are devastating to COPS.

During the introduction stage, recruits have their first contact with the police subculture and the discipline and strict obedience that are required of them. The informal content includes lessons about the police subculture (see Alpert and Dunham 1997). The traditional recruit curriculum converges with the classic ideals perpetuated by that

subculture, such as an emphasis on crime fighting, making arrests, and getting "a good pinch." This stage also exposes recruits to the "police personality," characterized by secrecy, isolation and cynicism (Skolnick 1966, Westley 1970). The police personality will develop more fully when recruits hit the streets as rookies. The police personality complicates efforts to use experts outside law enforcement as instructors—isolated cynical officers are less likely to accept outside messengers. This especially complicates in-service training, but the orientation also filters down to recruit training.

Neither the crime fighting ideal of the police subculture nor the attributes of the police personality correspond well with the demands of COPS. COPS officers will need to gravitate toward problem solving and community building rather than high profile arrests. They will need to be accepted into the community and accepting of community input rather than isolated, apart, and suspicious. They will need to be more democratic and less authoritarian in their orientation than traditional officers.

3. Legal Protection and Failure to Train

Training cuts two ways in another sense—it both enhances what officers can do and it protects officers and agencies, to a degree, in the event that something bad happens. The terminology used in training academies underscores the protective function of training. The skills (driving, firearms, defensive tactics, officer safety and first responder) are lumped together and designated to be "high liability areas." The concern about lawsuits should not be taken lightly (see Ross 2000). Under some circumstances, the trainees can sue trainers and the public can sue officers and agencies for failure to train.

Del Carmen and Smith (2001) review the liability of law enforcement under state (e.g., tort) and federal law (e.g., section 1983 civil rights law). Although failure to train can give rise to both state and federal lawsuits, the law makes it difficult for plaintiffs to prevail. For example, trainees are frequently presumed to assume some risk of injury during training unless the instructors have intentionally or recklessly conducted the training. See, for example, Hamilton v. Martinelli and Associates et al. (see Stone and Berger 2004). Qualified immunity may help protect law enforcement from some claims by citizens as long as actions were taken within the scope of employment and were not egregious. Del Carmen and Smith (2001: 191) highlight two steps that departments need to take to help protect against liability: "(1) a pre-employment training program must be in place; and (2) the training program must focus on the skills needed in policing…" We would only add that as policing changes, training needs to keep pace, which raises the prospect that negligent hiring (both of instructors for teaching and of rookies who attended academies with inadequate training that are behind the times) may complicate liability. Supervisors who know or should know about officers who are inadequately trained can also be liable (Ross 2000).

There are several inter-related implications to the double-edged reality that training is designed both to help officers perform well and to protect against lawsuit when they do not. Standardization of training is functional for liability reasons, but training in knowledge areas may be difficult to standardize. For example, learning to shoot a firearm is fairly standard, while learning to communicate with a hostile murder suspect will present unique challenges each and every time. The knowledge areas for policing are not conducive to standardized textual treatments. Teaching law illustrates the point.

Rather than memorizing statutes, law students are trained to think like lawyers so they can analyze fact patterns within and across cases and fit facts with legal precepts. Police officers have to do very much the same thing, but in "real time," during on-going encounters. Yet, their training in law under traditional academy approaches is text driven and mechanical and not case or scenario based. Arguably, traditional academy law training does not prepare recruits to apply the law well.

One function of standardized training is to establish a customary practice so that officers know (and can be presumed to follow) standardized procedures. Plaintiffs suing law enforcement have a more difficult time attributing bad outcomes to officer errors or omissions if officers are adequately trained and have established routines or customary practices. Plaintiffs have the burden of proof to show that those practices were not followed—the operating presumption favors law enforcement. Even if bad consequences can be attributed to officers, "good faith" mistakes are protected by qualified immunity so plaintiffs frequently must prove some kind of egregious error. That is harder to do if officers have been trained and supervised adequately. Agencies that do not train or are negligent in their training have a harder time defending the actions of their officers when things go wrong. Agencies can distance themselves more easily from rogue officers if customary training and routine supervision is in place. The reform or legalistic era of policing during the 20th century restricted the discretion of field officers and increased supervision for good reasons. The decentralization of authority and the increased autonomy of decision making for COPS officers raise legitimate concerns about new legal liabilities that need to be anticipated in training.

Certification and licensure are ways to establish the adequacy of training. The process, however, encourages standardized certification examinations. Standardized examinations protect agencies against claims of inadequate training and also help defend against discrimination claims when candidates fail the exams. To the extent that COPS relies on mastery of more knowledge areas that are not easily standardized, COPS presents challenges for examinations and certifications.

Academies need a high "pass" rate and they can "teach to the test" to get that pass rate if everything is standardized. Recruit training is expensive, so agencies that operate their own academies must make sure their trainees pass certification or they will bear the cost. Where agencies sponsor recruits to attend academies, they also want success or they bear the cost. Agencies want to recruit from academies that have a good track record for screening and training recruits. Regardless of the source of recruits or funding, academies have an institutional interest in their graduates having high pass rates.

Given these pressures, we should not be surprised if trainers "teach to the test." We offer an anecdote to illustrate the way in which this affects police behavior. One of the authors was researching courthouse records and was surprised to see so many police arrest charges for "principal in the first degree"—a relatively obscure legal concept and a charge that the prosecutors always changed before formal charges were issued. The author later observed the delivery of the law section of a traditional academy recruit session. Students were memorizing the legal definition of principal in the first degree via a straight lecture format. Sometime later, the same researcher observed a state meeting where "subject matter experts" were re-working the certification examination. Projected on the overhead was a question about "principal in the first degree." The instructors

taught about principal in the first degree, and the certification test covered it. The recruits learned the concept by rote, but did not know how to apply it in practice as was evidenced by the prosecutors' decisions to change the formal charges. Teaching to the test did not enhance performance.

A New Academy Training Approach

The fact that COPS is being adopted so widely means that training will likely adapt. Some places are already making changes. For example, the state of Florida has adopted a new academy curriculum called Curriculum Maintenance System (CMS),[1] which expressly incorporates COPS into a scenario-based approach. The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) has also moved toward new academy training, which was the focus of a recent RAND Corporation analysis (Glenn et al. 2003). We use that analysis to illustrate the wave of the future as training incorporates COPS into its courses and delivery.

LAPD's new policing philosophy recognizes that training must reflect as closely as possible the actual working conditions for which recruits are being prepared (Fyfe 1996). Learning content is not enough; trainees must also be able to digest and interpret material and synthesize it with practical skills. Only this more sophisticated training will enable officers to adapt to the ever-changing demands of their jobs and to improvise in unpredictable situations in the field. Glenn et al. (2003) present four elements fundamental to successful training and consider how each is incorporated into the training experience at LAPD: contextualized learning, integration of topics throughout curriculum, scenario building, and debriefing.

[1] Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission's CMS Application-based law enforcement basic recruit training curriculum.

1. Contextualize the Learning

Contextualized learning is an adult learning principle that seeks to tie new information to existing knowledge bases and real life situations. It integrates new information with existing knowledge. Based on the assumption that training should mimic reality, it better prepares recruits for the real life situations they will eventually encounter. Simulated real life incidents (scenarios) are useful because they may require the recruit to integrate many knowledge bases with an emergency tactical situation. In real life situations, police officers are often confronted with a multitude of issues in a single citizen contact. It is unlikely that officers will be able to perform a traffic stop, for example, without also having to use communication, law, and officer safety lessons. The approach frames new information in the context of what is already known. It recognizes that recruits need to be trained the same way that they will eventually do their jobs, and that a relationship exists between skills and knowledge. That relationship calls for a critical problem solving synthesis that changes from context to context and, therefore, runs counter to the standardization preferred in traditional training.

2. Integrate Key Topics throughout the Curriculum

Integration of key topics, also known as "threading," means that selected important themes will be discussed in relation to each substantive topic or module (i.e., woven throughout the curriculum). For example, communications lessons (or diversity training or officer safety) can be reinforced in arrest scenarios, in crowd control exercises, and in community relations material. Skills and knowledge must be integrated in the field, so training should not cover subject areas only in distinct, separate units. Integration helps recruits learn to draw connections among multiple subject areas, which

facilitates mastery over the curriculum and prepares recruits for problem solving challenges when they enter the field. Recruits will be in a better position to deal with unique contexts and help develop appropriate responses to a neighborhood's problems.

3. Build the Scenario

Scenarios allow the recruit to apply contextualized learning and topic integration by grounding instruction in the "known" while introducing the "new." Scenarios help align a curriculum with the main tenets of adult learning: learning by doing, reflecting real life, and making the learning interactive and self directed (Glenn et al. 2003). Scenarios inherently require the integration of topics. They transform abstract knowledge into understandable, practical and applicable skills. Scenarios give recruits the opportunity to practice applying what they have learned. Instructors and other police officers put together unique and surprising scenarios that encourage the recruits to "think on their feet" in unexpected situations to find workable, and perhaps even creative, solutions.

4. Conduct a Thorough Debriefing (after the scenario)

Consistent and structured debriefings are important to solidify learning. Because scenarios are unstandardized and involve open-ended interactions, instructors need to tie everything together in the end and review lessons. The debriefing also informs recruits about how they have performed and how they can improve. Recruits have an opportunity to discuss and reconsider their performance, and use their experience as a springboard for further learning. This reflection is important for adult learning. It prepares recruits for the feedback loop that is an inherent part of problem solving models like SARA. SARA is an acronym which stands for scanning for problems, analyzing the factors that contribute to

problems, responding in ways that can alleviate problems, and assessing the results (Eck and Spelman 1987).[2]

Training Challenges Revisited

The way in which LAPD has incorporated threading, scenarios, contextualization, and debriefing into training mirrors what the authors have experienced in Florida observing CMS recruit training and continuation training of officers at a Regional Community Policing Institute (RCPI). These new curricula and improved delivery methods address many of the challenges that confront law enforcement training.

1. Curriculum and Delivery Challenges

Glenn et al (2003) observed a complete transformation in the way that LAPD recruit training was delivered. For the most part, instead of using standardized lecture-only techniques, the LAPD academy implemented adult learning principles that included scenarios and debriefing. The authors also observed this in the CMS training (Florida). In fact, one Florida training center adds 40 hours of scenario training to the required CMS curriculum. Even with that addition, recent recruits wanted more scenarios, more instructors to perform scenarios, and the spread of scenarios throughout the instruction. In the words of one recruit: "Scenario training was awesome, very real life!"

Overall, both LAPD and the Florida academy did a good job of using adult learning techniques. These techniques helped to keep the recruits alert and involved in their learning. This should better prepare them for law enforcement work in the field.

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[2] Other problem solving models also have a feedback loop. For example, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) use the CAPRA model and Florida Department of Law Enforcement's new CMS curriculum uses SECURE© (which stands for Safety, Ethics, Community, Understanding, Response, and Evaluation) to blend crisis management, routine investigation, and long-term problem solving.

Glenn et al (2003) report that the LAPD academy balanced the acquisition of skills with learning other subjects. The same can be said of our observations of the CMS curriculum in Florida. In fact, the first 194 hours of CMS training deal with knowledge areas rather than the acquisition of skills. Knowledge bases, such as law and diversity, were well-integrated into most of the modules, including those focusing primarily on skill building. Scenarios helped to pull both skills and knowledge bases together in an integrated and synthesized fashion. For example, instructors encouraged recruits to use information learned in diversity and interpersonal communication in a module on defensive tactics.

2. Occupational Socialization, Recruitment Challenges, and Informal Lessons

The first stage of occupational socialization is preentry and refers to screening and self selection of recruits, something that Glenn et al. (2003) did not discuss in their review of LAPD training. Our own experience in Florida indicates that academy personnel are sensitive to recruitment realities. They are concerned that the abilities of many of their new recruits may not be sufficient to excel given the demands of the new curriculum. We argue here that academies and police administrators need to consciously examine how to recruit the kinds of candidates who will excel in the new training and make the best COPS officers. We think the new COPS philosophy of policing calls for different types of recruits.

In fact, some police administrators are interested in developing police selection centers to support regional police academies and agencies in the identification and selection of the best applicants for the discipline. Using minimum standards set by the state's licensing body; a selection center uses techniques based in

industrial/organizational psychology to match job tasks with the skills, knowledge and abilities of the applicants. Advances within selection centers will focus on research on the discipline's needs in community policing and provide law enforcement agencies with access to new data technology and interpersonal skills of the recruit candidate.

The introduction stage of police socialization occurs at the academy. Both the LAPD evaluation and our own observations of training in Florida reveal that the new curricula introduce recruits to COPS and thread lessons relevant to the philosophy and practice of COPS throughout the various modules and areas of instruction. Not only has the content changed but the delivery also has consciously incorporated adult learning practices that require students to analyze, integrate, and apply lessons through scenarios. The formal socialization is indeed different from traditional training.

Despite the best efforts of the instructors, the informal lessons and messages still present a challenge to training. While the curriculum urges recruits to work coactively with the community to solve problems and build trust, the informal lessons still convey an "us vs. them" mentality. Although COPS calls for the gathering of accurate information to build knowledge about specific areas in order to problem solve, the informal message is to fight crime and make arrests.

There is a divergence between the police subculture and the COPS curriculum. Instructors, almost all of whom came of age in traditional policing, are "teaching" COPS formally, but are often informally sending different signals (for example, when they share "war stories" and experiences with recruits).

Van Maanen (1973) suggests that war stories are delivered differently from formal lessons. The authority relations become more egalitarian, recruits are able to relax,

laugh, and join in the exchange. In other words, the instructor becomes more of a facilitator, where learning occurs through interactions that integrate life experiences. The informal lessons in war stories may be better learned by adult recruits than is the formal curriculum.

The informal messages may be so salient that they may counteract the formal curriculum. The new policing training may not be fully effective until the COPS philosophy is fully integrated into the operating environments of police agencies, their organizational goals, and the larger police culture. Even if recruits adopt favorable attitudes toward COPS and problem solving in the academy, attitudes may dissipate if they are not consistently and continuously reinforced. Haarr (2001) warns that traditional subcultural values of police can override what recruits have learned in the academy. Academy personnel have impressed upon us the need to have field training officers who are knowledgeable about COPS so that the lessons learned in the academy will be reinforced in the field.

3. Legal Implications

By integrating COPS into training, the new curricula expect officers to have a broader knowledge base and to be able to apply that knowledge to help solve a variety of problems in the community. The knowledge and its eventual application are less standardized. The training encourages creative analyses and the practice of COPS requires more autonomy for field officers. Supervisors will not be able to apply hard and fast parameters to manage COPS officers. We are concerned about how COPS and the new training deal with legal liability issues. For example, if COPS officers take the lead to clean up a trashy, weedy vacant lot and enlist community volunteers, but they proceed

without taking due care to protect the volunteers from injury, will tort liability ensue? How do academies adequately train for the unstandardized contingencies that problem solving entails? How do administrators exert supervision in a way that encourages creative problem solving without increasing the risk of legal liability?

Authority Relations as a Core Concern for Training in the 21st Century

Running through much of the preceding discussion is a theme that is critical to law enforcement but that is not always explicit. Policing is premised on authority relations, and successful policing depends on how well those authority relations are managed. Authority relations have to be managed both between officers and citizens (where the officers are the authorities) and between officers and their supervisors and administrative "brass" (where the officers are the subjects of authority).

Training recognizes these authority relations, but only to a degree. Formal lessons on arrest and law establish police authority and address how it can be asserted. Lessons about chain of command, supervision, and agency procedures and policies teach recruits and officers about their position in the authority structure of their organizations.

Some of the training lessons on authority are extra-curricular. Van Maanen (1973) describes how recruits are subordinated to others during training. They must wear specific uniforms, use special "recruit" parking, and stand at attention when "real" officers and civilians pass by. Trainees learn the importance of group cohesion and solidarity; they are punished and rewarded as a group. In keeping with the quasi-military style adopted by police, academies reproduce some features of boot camp. As in boot camps, the importance of recruits' individual identities are diminished so that a shared occupational identity can emerge.

In some rare circumstances, officers need to operate in the face of danger as a unit and automatically obey commands for the good of all. Most police work, however, does not pose combat-like challenges. Officers find themselves in different authority relations depending on the circumstances. A display of authority and implicit threat of coercion may be effective in an arrest situation. Empathy and active listening may work best when interviewing a traumatized victim to gather evidence. Deference may be the key when interacting with a supervising sergeant or in court.

One criminologist, Austin Turk (1969; 1982) has explicitly addressed authority relations. He argues that conflict is inherent in authority relationships and that authority relations are the central problem for order maintenance (Lanza-Kaduce and Greenleaf 1994). The key is to understand how to manage authority relations to enhance compliance and minimize overt conflict and resistance. The organization and sophistication of those who have authority and those who are subject to authority can alter the balance between order and conflict. Research supports Turk's basic argument that authority relations can be managed to decrease conflict (Greenleaf and Lanza-Kaduce 1995).

The implications are important for training. For example, officers who can communicate and use language better can defuse potential conflicts more easily, obtain better information from witnesses, prepare better cases for prosecutors, and interact more easily with their supervisors. Modern training recognizes the importance of communications sophistication in de-escalating conflict, and in managing incidents or calls for service. Currently, training often includes lessons in verbal judo as an alternative to an overt use of force. The sophisticated officer who is sensitive to cultural differences because of diversity training can also manage authority relations better. Ironically, these

subjects are the ones that some trainees resist most, even though they provide some of the most useful tools in the field.

Turk also posits that people generally defer to authority. Two of the reasons are that we learn norms of deference (including that we should defer to the police) and that we understand differences in power. Lanza-Kaduce and Greenleaf (2000) extended this argument and researched resistance by citizens to the police. When broader social norms of deference regarding age and race reinforced the official authority of police officers, people were more likely to defer. Because people have been socialized to defer to authorities who are older and white rather than to authorities who were young and nonwhite, older white officers have fewer problems with resistance from citizens according to their research. The training implications are important. Authority relations will be especially complicated for recruits (who are not only less experienced and less sophisticated but who are also young). The situation is compounded for minority recruits who will face the highest probability of resistance in their encounters with the public once they enter the field. We argue that training needs to deal directly with such complicated authority relations so officers can manage them better. One training activity that may be useful in dealing with this issue is role playing.

COPS further complicates the challenge presented by authority relations. COPS officers still have to be trained to deal with potential resistance from suspects in police-citizen encounters. In those situations, the lines of authority are clear. When COPS officers *partner* with citizens to identify and seek problem solving solutions, when police officers work within their own organizations, and when they seek assistance from outside service providers to implement solutions, the lines of authority blur.

Three of the salient themes in the new COPS paradigm are: community involvement, problem solving, and organizational decentralization (see Oliver 1998). Each entails important shifts in authority relations for which officers need to be prepared.

1. Community Involvement

A sense of community cannot be imposed; it must be home-grown. The telling feature of community for COPS, the sense of shared interest, needs to be identified by those who live and work in a geographical area. COPS officers can help move the process along but do not "own" a neighborhood's problems. In COPS, the role of law enforcement officers needs to shift to reflect this more "democratic" take on policing. Are they trained well enough to interact with residents as partners? Are they sensitive to community issues and concerns? Can they facilitate community building?

Working with communities involves sorting through competing values and ideas while knowing what is feasible and workable in that context. Not all neighborhoods will have citizens with sophisticated knowledge and skills to assist with the solutions, leaving the officers carrying more of the load. COPS officers need skills in leadership, communications, interpersonal relations, diversity awareness, and a variety of other areas to assist in problem solving. The reconfiguration of power/authority relations in COPS requires officers to be trained differently from traditional models. The very subject matters that officers have historically trivialized (e.g., social issues, communications) are central to their new roles. Arguably these subjects need more emphasis and more time during training. In fact, the list of "soft" subjects probably needs to increase. Palmiotto, Birzer and Unnithan (2000), for example, explicitly include a subject heading for

"social/economical/political make-up of community" in their list of recommended classes.

Expertise, rather than the symbols of power and coercion, will be the basis for partnerships in community outreach. Well-trained COPS officers will be able to lead in positive ways—ways that citizens will support and endorse rather than resent. COPS officers will not contribute to community involvement if they "throw their weight around" or play the authority card too heavy-handedly.

2. Problem Solving

Officer leadership is especially important to problem solving. Typically, problems and solutions are unique (or at least have dimensions that are unique) to a particular neighborhood. The COPS philosophy is premised on the notion that informal social controls (those exerted by citizens who have a stake in their own neighborhoods) will be more effective over the long term than traditional police reactions to incidents, like arrests. This is one of the important lessons of the "broken windows" model (Wilson and Kelling 1982) that informs COPS to solve quality of life issues. Training will need to focus on both skills for motivating community involvement and on the problems communities are likely to face, such as drugs, alcohol, domestic violence, speeding, noise, delinquency, and gangs.

COPS officers will have to learn how to identify and support community defined priorities. Residents may be able to identify problems but not fully appreciate which factors maintain the undesirable state of affairs. For example, residents concerned primarily with burglary may not have the luxury of ignoring vice crimes and so-called victimless crimes that send crime-promoting signals and attract additional criminality.

COPS officers may need to educate residents and forge consensus through problem solving about workable solutions. But COPS officers cannot do so if they are ill-prepared in subjects of crime causation and prevention (e.g., COMPSTAT, crime mapping, routine activities theory). Training will have to be open to outside expertise, and training centers will have to find ways to break down the traditional resistance to outsiders.

Traditional policing which emphasizes top-down authority relations, where police have "ownership" over crime problems, needs to give way to community involvement and partnerships. Success will depend on training that understands how to share power and authority, how to gather information and suggestions, how to work through conflict to build consensus, and how to cooperate and coordinate with others. The new demands of the job require a shift in the paradigm of police training that must be introduced in academies for recruits, reinforced by field training officers as recruits go onto the job, and repeated during in-service training.

3. Organizational Decentralization

The success of COPS officers in working with residents to define and solve community problems rests on whether the authority relations in law enforcement organizations can evolve in ways that permit bottom-up problem solving and top-down support for the efforts. COPS requires decentralization of authority in law enforcement organizations (Oliver 1998). Supervisors must work with COPS officers to identify time and resources to assist officers in their coordination with the community in the problem solving model. The profession cannot remove supervision and policy regulations in ways that increase corruption and abuse. Policies and supervision, however, will have to adjust

for COPS to work well, and members of law enforcement organizations will need to establish different patterns of authority.

The COPS philosophy calls for a hybrid system to deal with the various problems in neighborhoods (Chappell and Lanza-Kaduce 2004). Other kinds of organizations have faced similar challenges. Some, like many technology firms, have adopted what is called a matrix organization in order to increase effectiveness.

Matrix organizations are based on a web of relationships (Mee 1964). They rely on team management and adopt a grid structure that integrates resources from different sectors rather than impose a top-down hierarchical structure (Kolodny 1979). These organizations concentrate on particular sources, projects, or divisions, so lines of authority converge at a lower level in the organization (Daft 1992). Matrix organizations have dual reporting relationships; an employee may have to answer to a quality manager and a financial manager (a COPS officer has to answer to a supervisor and the community). They emphasize flexibility and adaptability to ever-changing conditions. Their success rests on problem solving, conflict management and communication skills. Employees have to value a diversity of opinions, as well as how to move from reactive to proactive behavior.

The parallels with COPS are striking. Effective community policing requires building relationships within the neighborhood, between the neighborhood and law enforcement, and with other service providers. Resources need to be found and integrated to focus on addressing community issues. COPS officers need to facilitate working teams that concentrate on particular agreed upon problems, and they must have

the autonomy and support from both the community and the police agency to do so. They need to be flexible and proactive, rather than just reactive to crime.

The question we pose is whether law enforcement training, for existing officers, and administrators, or for recruits, is anticipating these organizational changes. Other organizations have successfully made the transition, a transition that can be facilitated by training that helps employees understand the new structure and learn how to operate effectively within it. The success of COPS depends on learning a new way to organize and conduct law enforcement—new patterns of authority relationships. The COPS philosophy may have outstripped both the traditional organizational structure of law enforcement and the training regimen. The lag may doom the promise of COPS unless training can adjust quickly to help mesh the democratic community-based philosophy with field practices that are supported by a new organizational structure and philosophy.

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