Sociology 3395: Criminal Justice and Corrections: Overheads Lecture 9: Police Operations

Today we will begin our look at police operations.

(1) History of the Police:

* After Norman Conquest the community pledge system emerged in England, led by "Shire-Reeve" (Sheriff)

* "Watch system" emerged in 13th Century, responsible to "Area Constable"

* 1326: emergence of "Justice of the Peace," later supplemented by "Parish Constables"

* 1700's: Military called in to control crime in London (unpopular)

* 1753: Henry Fielding's "Bow Street Runners"

* 1829: Sir Robert Peel's "Metropolitan Police Act" creates police force:

   (1) To reduce tension/conflict
   (2) To use non-violent means if possible
   (3) To relieve the military
   (4) To be judged by absence of crime

* Colonial Canada: initially followed early English/French practices

* 1835 Toronto first municipal police/ others followed

* NWMP (1873) largely policed the West

* Early municipal forces attempted to maintained order, control and prevent crime, and provide community services

* Technological advancements gradually separated police from community

(2) Distribution of the Police in Canada:

* 84,000 people employed by police (2005). 61,000 were officers

* Three levels of police: Federal (9.7%)
Provincial (25%)
Municipal (65.3%)

* Size of force determined by: (1) population/officer ratio
(2) reported incident/officer ratio

(3) The Organization/Efficiency of the Police:

* Professional model of policing: (1) Hierarchical rank structure

(2) Functional differentiation of jobs

(3) Routine, formal procedures

(4) Centralized command

* Police efficiency traditionally measured by:

(1) Response times
(2) Arrest rates

* Both measures problematic. Some helpful supplementary practices:

- differential response practices
- emphasis on "clearance rates"
- % of arrests leading to prosecutions
- a focus on fear reduction

(4) The Police Role/Operational Style:

* Police have moved away from pure criminal investigation to acting as:

(1) Social agents (i.e. problem solvers)
(2) "Watchmen" (e.g. maintaining order without frequent arrests)
(3) Law enforcers (e.g. enforcing to "the letter of the law")
(4) Crime fighters (e.g. total focus on detecting/apprehending
serious criminals to the exclusion of all else)

(5) The Patrol Function:

* Purposes of police patrols: (1) Deterring crime
(2) Maintaining public order/security
(3) Providing unrelated

services 24-7

* Main activities of patrol officers:

    - Deterrence through visibility
    - Maintaining order in area
    - Quick response
    - ID/apprehend law violators
    - Helping those who cannot help selves
    - Facilitating mobility
    - Creating community sense of security
    - Obtaining statements
    - Arresting/Transporting suspects

* Incident driven policing emerged in 1930's: largely reactive response
(may contain some proactive elements)

* Types of patrols:

    -directed controls (e.g. "hot spots" patrol)
    - traditional foot patrols

* Evidence suggests varying types of patrols doesn't reduce crime

(6) Criminal Investigations:

* Investigation = second main function of police

* Detectives =15-20% of forces, with various specializations

* 3 types of cases: (1) unsolvable; (2) solvable; and (3) already solved

* Detectives take over where patrol officers leave off:

    - reviewing existing files
    - securing crime scene
    - collecting statements
    - collecting forensic evidence
    - interrogating suspects
    - more aggressive tactics (e.g. 'stings'/ undercover operations)

(7) Policing Modern Society:

* Research showed limits of traditional policing by 1980's

* Response: community policing

* "Broken windows" model: (1) Neighborhood disorder creates fear
      (2) Neighborhoods give crime-promoting
      signals
      (3) Police need citizen cooperation

* Problem-oriented policing: Focus on solving root causes of crime by:

    (1) Scanning   (3) Response
    (2) Analysis   (4) Assessment

* The problem of facilitating community support remains: focus needed on decentralized, neighborhood based policing strategies. Thus, the move to community policing.

* Community policing: 3 goals:

    (1) The formation of community partnerships;
    (2) Organizational change;
    (3) problem-solving.

* Criticisms of community policing:

    - vagueness
    - more rhetoric than new, substantive action
    - officers still do much paperwork vs. interacting with community
    - command structure resistant to change
    - difficulties defining community/ integrating officers

* "Zero-tolerance" policies: focus on maintaining order:

    - crime rates reduced
    - civil rights & civilian complaints increase
    - popular approach despite similar drops in crime elsewhere with
      alternative (less repressive) policies

(8) Intelligence-Led Policing:

* Emphasizes computer-assisted programs for identifying high-crime areas/offenders and targeting responses

* Emerged in Britain in 1990's as police struggled with

globalization and new technologies used by offenders

* Four goals:

 (1) Targeting repeat offenders using both overt and covert means;
 (2) Managing crime and disorder in hot spots;
 (3) Investigating the links between crimes and incidents; and
 (4) Developing and implementing preventative measures,
 especially through multiagency partnerships.

* Criticisms:

 -relies too heavily on informants with own agendas
 -effectiveness, fairness and accountability
 -law still lags technology

(9) Aboriginal/ First Nation Police:

* 1978: 25 Quebec reserves set up semi-autonomous police forces (reduced dependence on outsiders/ more culturally sensitive)

* Mostly involved in service functions vs. addressing criminal incidents

* Many incidents dealt with informally

* 1980's/early 1990's: government inquiries focused on problems faced by Aboriginals

* 1991: First Nations Policing Policy enacted: Aboriginal

communities given more control over policing on reserves

* By 1998, 69% of First Nations population on reserve had signed on
(either to own "stand alone" forces or contracting with other forces)

* Possible problems:

    - relative lack of resources
    - conflicting policing styles
    - possible alternative uses of resources

* Still, this approach is at least more culturally sensitive than in the past

Conclusion:

* Many questions arise re: police effectiveness

* Much experimentation since 1980's: (e.g. community policing/ Aboriginal policing)

* Many issues still need to be worked out (e.g. decentralizing decision making)