SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY POLICING VERSUS TRADITIONAL POLICING AMONG NONMETROPOLITAN POLICE OFFICERS: A SURVEY OF FOUR NEW MEXICO POLICE DEPARTMENTS

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The study of US policing is more accurately described as the study of police in the nation’s large departments. Some 12,288 local police agencies and nearly 500,000 sworn full-time officers serve US cities, large and small (US Department of Justice, 1992). Over one-half of all such officers work in a small number of very large cities and metropolitan areas; indeed, one police officer in five works in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles or Detroit (Abadinsky and Winfree 1992, p. 224). However, three out of every four departments in the USA serve populations under 25,000, and the majority of the nation’s agencies employ fewer than 25 police officers (US Department of Justice, 1992). Critically, for police studies, the work world outside of the large metropolitan police departments remains something of an enigma.

What we do know about administrative and operational policing concerns in small cities and towns we have learned from a handful of studies (Crank 1989, 1991; Galliher et al., 1975; Kowaleski et al., 1984; Sims, 1988; Walker, 1992:44). Questions about the level of police professionalism, occupational solidarity and isolation in such departments are not only unanswered, they have been largely unasked. Given the complex legal and social issues that surround the police work-world (e.g. abuse of civil rights, corruption, community relations), and
given the large absolute number of small to moderate-sized police organizations in the nation, this research lacuna is difficult to fathom.

Besides the need for general knowledge, the small and medium sized police departments are important for their conceptual ties to community policing, an area of growing interest in police studies. That is, research on foot patrol programs typically examines the impact of such programs on limited geographical areas (cf. Bowers and Hirsch, 1987; Esbensen, 1987; Greene, 1987; Trojanowicz, 1982; 1987). Storefront police stations, by definition, serve only the immediate neighborhood (Holland, 1985). Problem-oriented policing, too, focuses on the local community (Goldstein, 1990). Problem-oriented policing is an anti-crime tactic in which relatively large amounts of police resources are focused on a single community problem, such as prostitution or drugs, in a limited geographic area (Hayeslip, 1989; Spelman and Eck, 1987). These communities or limited geographic areas may, in reality, be the equivalent of a small city or town. Indeed, they may provide natural experiments for questions related to community policing, not the least of which is: What is the level of support for community policing ideals among rank and file officers?

The current study represents an effort to provide insights into policing in small to medium sized departments in non-metropolitan areas. To this end, we attempted a census of all sworn officers in four separate New Mexico police departments, ranging in size from 60 to 125 sworn personnel. The officers were surveyed on a range of police issues, including police professionalism and solidarity; they were also asked to evaluate funding and perceptions of both traditional and community policing activities. We were interested in the correlates of police professionalism and solidarity. Moreover, we explored the ties between the level of support for these diverse police functions and the level of police solidarity and endorsement of ethical police conduct. Before turning to an examination of the results of this survey, however, a review of police professionalism, solidarity and community policing is in order.

**POLICE PROFESSIONALISM**

Before the Second World War, August Vollmer, former chief of the Berkeley, California Police Department and author of the Wickersham Commission report, and Richard Sylvester, former superintendent of the District of Columbia police department and
president of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, established goals of eliminating political influence and partisan public service, raising personnel standards, and increasing the educational level of police officers (Walker, 1992, p.12). Ethics is central to any profession, and police work is no exception (Abadinsky and Winfree, 1992:328, 329). In policing, ethical concerns range from the basic police mission, public trust, discretion, corruption, character, leadership, and use of deadly force (Delattre, 1989). Education would appear to play a substantive role in officer exposure to ethical practices; however, the volume of research into police professionalism and education, while considerable, lacks consensus as to education’s exact role. For example, Vogel and Adams (1983) found a positive association between educational commitment, as a measure of professionalism, and organizational rank; they failed to report any association between educational level and rank. Miller and Fry (1976) similarly determined that there was no relationship between education and law enforcement rank.

Professionalism has also been linked to job satisfaction, although the results are also mixed (Dantzker, 1994). For example, Griffin et al., (1978), in a study of a large police department, found that there were no significant differences in the levels of job satisfaction reported by officers across different educational levels. By contrast, Leftkowitz (1974) found that better educated officers were more satisfied with their salaries than their less educated peers. Schnitzius and Lester (1980) determined that officers who were more professional tended to be more satisfied with their jobs. Kayode (1973) and Finnigan (1976) studied the impact of education on job performance: Kayode found that the higher the educational level, the lower the supervisor’s rating of the officers; Finnigan reported that college graduates scored higher than nongraduates in departmental ratings.

In a review of the officer performance literature, Swanson (1977) reported little evidence indicating that education improves police performance. Bennett (1978), however, touched on perhaps the most significant issue related to police professionalism: the relationship between education and entry into the police subculture. He pointed out that the values learned in college may be in opposition to the values held by members of the police reference group; college educated officers find reference group affiliation difficult. It appears that college educated officers are less likely to become dependent on subcultural support and, therefore, are less likely to participate in the negative behaviors commonly associated with police subcultural affiliation.
Police professionalism exists for reasons beyond certain task-oriented procedures or even critical values learned as a result of higher education. For many officers, ethical decision making stems from a sense of rightness that comes from within the individual. As Delattre (1989:65) notes, “Good character includes a conception of what is worthy of oneself … peer pressure, weakness in others, impulse, opportunity, and personal rationalization or consolation do not excuse lapses of character”. This position is contrary to the notion that ethics are primarily the product of socialization (Sherman, 1982). Clearly, a police officer – or anyone – cannot be taught to steal, lie, or cover-up the sins of others providing what is being taught runs counter to basic and strongly held beliefs.

POLICE SOLIDARITY

Solidarity, or fellowship arising from common responsibilities and interests, is a common feature of many occupational subcultures. However, there is an unusually high degree of social cohesiveness and solidarity among police officers (Skolnick, 1966). It is generally accepted that the observed significance of the police subculture largely stems from police officer perceptions of the community at large.

The Police and the Public

The police frequently view the public as uncooperative, indifferent, and hostile. Westley (1970) claimed that nearly three-quarters of the officers he interviewed believed that the public was hostile to the police, while only 12 percent were of the opinion that they were liked by the public. For his part, Van Maanen (1973a:408) believed that the police come to see themselves as “outsiders”:

To classify the police as outsiders helps us to focus on several important things: the distinctive social definitions used by persons belonging to such marginal subcultures (e.g., “everybody hates a cop”); the outsider’s methods for managing tension created by his social position (e.g. “always protect brother officers”); and the explicit delineation of the everyday standards of conduct followed by the outsider (e.g. “lay low and avoid trouble”).
Walker (1992:225) has argued that the police are simply unaware of a high degree of community support. As evidence of this contention, he (Walker, 1992:227) points to the 1975 National Crime Survey, which reported that eight in ten whites and seven in ten African-Americans rated the police as good or average.

**Consequences of Police Solidarity**

Early findings (e.g. Westley, 1956) seemed to indicate that the police advance an us-versus-them mentality marked by secrecy and lying, also called the blue code of secrecy (Barker and Carter, 1986; Blumberg and Niederhoffer, 1985; Kennedy, 1977; Niederhoffer, 1967; Stoddard, 1983). Van Maanen (1975) similarly identified the existence of police categorizations whereby all others but the police are seen as subjects of mistrust. Secrecy is believed to be an essential element in officer loyalty (Westley, 1956). It is also viewed as a protective device against police administrators and the public alike. Membership within the police subculture may function to place any given officer in a position to benefit from peer empathy and loyalty in overcoming serious mistakes on the job (Alpert and Dunham, 1988). Since, by this operating model, loyalty is required for membership of the police subculture, one does not blow the whistle on fellow officers. Police solidarity was born and has flourished within a framework of a traditional model of policing, that is, quick response to calls within an alien community. Therefore, it should not be surprising that those officers most deeply entrenched in the police subculture may be the most resistant to recent community policing programs. Such officers also tend to distrust new philosophies or programs proposed by management; indeed, they may work against their successful implementation (Roberg and Kuykendall, 1993:447).

**POLICE WORK**

According to many police researchers, the notion of crime-fighting as police work is a popular myth, one created to a great extent by the mass media, including the news-reporting agencies, entertainment industry, and, more recently, “reality” television (Walker, 1992:62, 66). Police organizations tend to lend credibility to this myth during the recruit training process by devoting the vast majority of instruction to issues on law enforcement (Kirkham, 1974; Rubinstein, 1974; Van
Maanen, 1973a). Virtually all police researchers agree that somewhat less than one-third of police patrol time is spent on matters of law enforcement or crime fighting. Wilson (1968) analyzed calls for service to the Syracuse, New York, Police Department. He reported that a mere 10 percent of requests for police service concerned criminal law enforcement. In perhaps the most comprehensive study of police work, Scott (1981) gathered data from 24 local police departments in three metropolitan areas: Rochester (New York), St Louis (Missouri) and Tampa (Florida). One of every 20 calls for service was to report crimes, of which only 2 percent were crimes of violence. Scott (1981:28) also summarized most calls for police as occurring in three separate areas:

(1) report breaches of the peace,
(2) community services requests, and
(3) requests for or offers of information.

As stated by Van Maanen (1973b:414), and supported by other researchers (Reiss, 1971 Webster, 1970), the police are primarily “order-takers” who are “married to their radios”. Myth or not, it appears that the police see themselves as crime fighters. Making arrests is, to most officers, real police work (Van Maanen, 1973c). By contrast, order maintenance and service functions are seen as unfortunate consequences of patrol work. Just as police rush to “hot calls”, they may “lay back” when responding to calls for order maintenance in the hope that the incident will have de-escalated prior to their arrival. Often the opposite occurs, and verbal confrontations become physically violent while the police travel to the call. As Walker (1992:62) observed, the publicly accepted myth of the police as essentially crime fighters creates unrealistic expectations of police, especially in terms of crime-clearance rates. The public might accept the fact that only one in five cases is resolved by an arrest (US Department of Justice, 1992) if they understood the diverse, often conflicting job functions associated with police work.

COMMUNITY POLICING

Since the concept has been made popular by Wilson and Kelling (1982), the notion of “community policing” has emerged as a new
strategy in police roles and goals. Goldstein (1990:24) used the term "community-oriented policing" to refer to the many programs intended to enlist the citizenry to do more to police themselves. Part of this approach to policing is to elicit citizen help, but other important elements include reducing tension, reducing fear and facilitating police work in the community. According to Goldstein (1990:25), the definition of community, including its physical, political, and sociological characteristics, poses a major problem. Community policing has been manifested by such diverse programs as foot patrol, recreational programs, neighborhood anti-crime and crime awareness campaigns, and storefront police offices (Goldstein, 1990; Greene, 1993:367-94; Miller and Hess, 1994). In community policing, the officers are problem solvers and community organizers (Walker, 1992:179).

Besides attacks on the fundamental assumptions and historical analysis inherent in community policing (Reichers and Roberg, 1990; Walker, 1984), there is basic disagreement as to whether such tactics work. For example, although evaluations of community policing programs suggest that foot patrols, one outgrowth of this approach, foster greater citizen cooperation, reduce calls for service, and increase officer satisfaction; they do not necessarily reduce crime (Bowers and Hirsch, 1987; Esbensen, 1987; Trojanowicz, 1987). Other community policing programs such as “storefront” police stations and problem-oriented policing – the latter a focusing of police resources on a single community-level problem such as drugs or prostitution – tend to show positive results, but mainly in terms of public perceptions of police and crime, not in terms of real reductions in offending (Brown and Wycoff, 1987; Eck and Spelman, 1987; Hayeslip, 1989; Moore and Trojanowicz, 1988; Skogan and Wycoff, 1986). Finally, police administrators implicitly invalidate the service and order maintenance functions of their officers by two separate means. This invalidation first occurs within the performance evaluation process, which is invariably based on law enforcement related issues, such as arrests and citations. Issues such as citizen satisfaction in service activities and successful conflict resolution are overlooked within the scope of officer evaluation (Pogrebin, 1987). Traditional policing is based on quick response to calls and equally quick handling of the call. This condition acts against officers being allowed the time required to look at the root causes of the conflicts and seek reasonable solutions (Sherman and Beck, 1984).
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present research focuses on two sets of related issues:

(1) police solidarity and police professionalism, and

(2) support for community policing and support for traditional policing.

The specific research questions addressed in this article are as follows:

(1) To what extent are police professionalism and police solidarity related to each other, independent of officer personal-biographical characteristics?

(2) To what extent are personal-biographical characteristics, police solidarity and police professionalism related to officer levels of support for community policing and traditional policing activities?

RESEARCH METHODS

The Departments

We selected the four police departments for this study based on their size (small to medium) and location in the State of New Mexico. The administrators in all four departments agreed to cooperate fully. In late 1993 and early 1994, a two-person research team visited each department. At each site the researchers met with at least two shifts, usually the on-going and off-going shifts. A brief orientation was given to the officers as an explanation for our presence and the 20-page survey instrument. Not only did we explain the significance of the study (i.e. it represented a different focus from most police studies: due to its focus on small and moderate size police departments), but we also discussed the voluntary nature of participation and the anonymity of the method of administration. Survey packets, which included pre-paid return envelopes, were distributed to all officers on the shift, and a supply was
left for all other sworn officers in the department. We asked that all sworn officers – peace officers certified by the State of New Mexico – in a given department complete a questionnaire.

The departments in the study ranged from 60 to 125 sworn officers. They were located in various parts of New Mexico: One department (Collegetown Department) was in the southern part of the state and shared a border with Mexico; another department (Unified Department) was also located in the southern part of the state near a large military base and the officers were cross-trained as firefighters; the third department (Oiltown Department) was in the southeastern section of the state, near Texas and adjacent to a large oil extraction industry; and the fourth (Boomtown Department) was in the northern part of the state and was characterized by considerable growth in the past five years.

Collegetown Department consisted of 125 sworn officers. This organization followed a fairly traditional police organizational model. From the chief down, administrators placed a high premium on professionalism and had many resources available to individual officers. Collegetown Department served a population of approximately 65,000 persons. The city was part of a much larger international Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) of over 2 million residents. There was also a large state university located in this department’s jurisdiction.

Unified Department consisted of 60 sworn officers. There were specialized units, but not nearly as many as found in Collegetown. The community served by Unified Department had 25,000 residents and, while the area’s population was increasing, it was experiencing slower growth than was the case for Collegetown. It was also located 70 miles from the nearest MSA. Resources in this department were fewer than those in Collegetown Department. The officers were also part of a unified public-safety department, meaning that the individual officers were cross-trained in fire-fighting and carried their fire-fighting gear with them in their police units.

Oiltown Department had 79 sworn officers and was located in a relatively isolated part of the state; the nearest large city was 200 miles distant. The community, an oil “mecca” during the 1970s, experienced considerable decline in both population and revenues throughout the 1980s. The population of the city stood at roughly 30,000 persons. Traditionally one of the better paying departments in the state, it had not recruited many new officers in the past five years.

Boomtown Department employed 90 sworn officers. This organization, situated in the state’s north west corner, was one of the most
professional in the state. The chief was active on many state-wide commissions. His belief in the significance of education was reflected in the fact that the department almost exclusively recruits college graduates and is one of the best paying departments in the state. In spite of its relatively small size, the department maintained a number of specialized units. There was also much inter-agency cooperation. Boomtown Department served a growing city of 35,000 residents.

The Officers

The officers in the four departments returned a total of 162 completed questionnaires. Given that there were approximately 350 sworn officers authorized in the four departments, the resulting 46 percent response rate was disappointing. The individual department response rates ranged from 33 percent to 58 percent. The overall response rate does not take into account two important observations. First, most of the departments were at least 5 percent understaffed. Second, roughly 10 percent of a given department’s sworn officers were on vacation, ill, assigned other duties, or otherwise absent at the time we administered the survey instruments. Factoring these two observations into the equation yields an adjusted response rate of slightly more than 55 percent. The 45 to 55 percent response rate range is consistent with prior department-based officer surveys (Griffin et al., 1978), although response rates in the 70 per cent-plus range are also reported in the literature (Buzawa et al., 1994; Crank et al., 1993; Dantzker, 1994). In short, the findings must be viewed with some caution as they may not be fully representative of the four departments sampled (Table 1).

The average officer in the sample was a 34-year old male, who had served nearly ten years with the department; only ten of the officers (6.2 percent) were female. Slightly more than one-half (54.9 percent) of the respondents were patrol officers, while nearly 20 percent were detectives; the rest were administrative staff through the rank of captain. These latter statistics configure rather well with what we know about the ratio of patrol/investigator personnel to administrators: patrol averages between 50 and 70 percent of sworn personnel, while detectives typically account for another 8 to 20 percent (Garmire, 1977:161; Roberg and Kuykendall, 1993:308, 337). Most officers had some college or technical school education. Four in ten officers had only a high school education. The vast majority had more than two years of higher education, which was not surprising given the close proximity of college campuses to all
four police departments. As a general observation, all of the departmental-level aggregate information configured well within the known parameters of each individual department.

**Resource Allocation**

The study focussed on two main dependent variables. First, we were interested in measuring the level of police officer support for the allocation of resources to both traditional police work and community policing. We asked the officers to indicate the amount of departmental resources (none, small amount, moderate amount, large amount, or very
large amount) that should be allocated to 15 different activities, all of which were selected to cover the breadth of policing activities. There was no indication in the survey instrument as to which area an individual item corresponded. Indeed, we employed factor analysis to determine the extent to which these 15 items grouped together to form discernible clusters; we subsequently determined if these clusters exhibited face validity with the goals of either traditional police work or community policing.

We employed factor analysis with oblique rotation and excluded any item that failed to load on a given factor with a factor load score of less than 0.4 or more than one factor with a loading greater than 0.3 (Armor, 1974). Of the original 15 items, only two failed one or more of these first two steps. The two-factor, 13 item solution explained 49.6 percent of the variance; the eigen values exceeded 1.0 for both factors. The first factor (eigen value = 4.62) consisted of the following six items (and item weights):

1. working with citizen groups to resolve local problems (0.82),
2. understanding problems of minority groups (0.78),
3. explaining crime prevention techniques to citizens (0.76),
4. getting to know juveniles (0.75),
5. communicating police services to the public (0.71); and
6. solving community problems in my area (0.65).

Based on the literature and face validity, these were the items which we considered representative of community policing values; moreover, the Chronbach’s alpha value for scale created from these items, which we termed COMWORK, suggests that the scale was very reliable (α = 0.85). Except for solving community problems in their area, the impact scores were remarkably similar. The higher the scale score, the greater the support for community policing activities as a group.

The second factor (eigen value = 1.82) included seven items which, when taken separately, addressed areas of traditional policing; we labeled the composite scale COPWORK. The individual items (and item weights) included the following:
patrolling in squad cars (0.75),
responding rapidly to calls for service (0.75),
investigating crimes (0.65),
assisting persons in emergencies (0.58),
making arrests where possible (0.58),
checking buildings and residences (0.55), and
traffic enforcement (0.52).

As in the case of COMWORK, the Chronbach’s alpha for COPWORK was reliable ($\alpha = 0.76$). Patrolling and responding to calls yielded the highest impact scores, followed closely by investigating crimes, suggesting that these items provided the best insights into traditional policing values. Except for making arrests, the remaining four items reflected largely service and public order functions. The higher the summated score, the higher the support for traditional policing activities as a group.

**Officer Attitudes and Orientations**

We were interested in the extent to which police professionalism and solidarity provided insights into officer support for the allocation of resources to either traditional policing or community policing activities. The questionnaire included nine professionalism items. Specifically, officers were asked the extent of their agreement (i.e. ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree) about a series of behaviors that dealt primarily with possible misconduct by fellow officers. In a second series of eight statements, officers were also asked the extent of their agreement about such things as police-officer group loyalty and “sticking together”.

We also subjected this group of items to factor analysis with oblique rotation. The results were very similar to those obtained for COPWORK and COMWORK. First, a total of seven items failed to cluster into one of the two factors. Second, the ten-item, two factor solution explained 46.1 percent of the variance. PROFSSNL, the first factor (eigen = 2.79), consisted of the following five items (and item weights):
(1) “A police officer should report a fellow officer for using unnecessary force in an arrest situation” (0.86),

(2) “A police officer should report a fellow top officer for violating a suspect’s rights” (0.83),

(3) “Cooperating with the investigation of a fellow officer is the correct thing to do” (0.78),

(4) “It is more important to follow the rules and regulations of the department even if it means disagreeing with your fellow officers” (0.77),

(5) “A police officer should arrest a fellow officer for drunken driving” (0.69).

This scale exhibited both face validity and reliability, the latter measured by the Chronbach method ($\alpha = 0.70$). It is interesting to note that the most salient items in the PROFSSNL scale involved unnecessary force and the violation of a suspect’s rights; also interesting is the fact that drunk-driving by police, while important, yielded the lowest impact score. Positive scores indicated high levels of professionalism; negative scores reflected low levels of professionalism.

Of the eight items intended to measure work-group solidarity, four appeared to provide the best insights, including (with item weights):

- “The only person a police officer can really trust is another police officer” (0.83),
- “Police officers should stick to other police officers for friendship outside of work” (0.74),
- “A police officer’s first loyalty must be to his fellow officers” (0.74),
- “It is very important to have the respect of the police officers you work with” (0.49),
- “Most problems are best dealt with by the work group and not the administration” (0.48).
COPSOLID (eigen value = 1.81) also demonstrated respectable reliability ($\alpha = 0.74$) and had considerable face validity. Trust and loyalty provided similar item weights, while respect and in-group problem solving exhibited somewhat lower impact scores. Positive scores indicated high solidarity, while negative scores reflected low solidarity.

**Design of Analysis**

We elected to use ordinary least squares regression analysis to answer our research questions. First, we created a regression equation using age, gender, educational levels, years of service, departmental affiliation and departmental position/assignment, as independent variables and police solidarity as the dependent variable; in a second model, or equation, we added police professionalism, operationalized as endorsement of ethical conduct, to the regression equation for police solidarity. Second, we regressed police professionalism against the same set of personal-biographical variables, and in a second model we included police solidarity as an independent variable. This procedure allowed us to determine the net effects of solidarity and professionalism on each other.

In our examination of community policing and traditional policing activities we employed a similar analytic strategy. First, we regressed community policing activities against all of the personal-biographical variables plus both solidarity and professionalism. Next we included support for traditional policing in a second equation. We repeated this procedure for traditional policing as the dependent variable and community policing as the variable excluded and subsequently included. Again, our goal was to determine the net effects of including support for one type of policing activity in an examination of the other.

**CORRELATES OF POLICE SOLIDARITY AND PROFESSIONALISM**

Table 2 reveals the correlates of solidarity and professionalism. In terms of police solidarity, Model 1 contains only the personal-biographical variables (e.g. age, gender, educational levels, years of service, departmental affiliation, and departmental position). Gender is dummy-coded, with males receiving a value of 1 and females constituting the excluded or reference category. The reference category for departmental affiliation was Collegetown, while administrators served
Table 2

Police Solidarity and Professionalism with Standardized Regression Coefficients and, in parentheses, Unstandardized Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Police Solidarity</th>
<th>Police Professionalism</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.095)</td>
<td>(0.016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.399)</td>
<td>(0.359)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>−0.222*</td>
<td>−0.241**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(−0.259)*</td>
<td>(−0.281)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years</td>
<td>−0.376**</td>
<td>−0.371**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(−0.046)</td>
<td>(−0.045)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boomtown</td>
<td>−0.055</td>
<td>−0.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(−0.117)</td>
<td>(−0.176)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oiltown</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>0.094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.218)</td>
<td>(0.222)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unifield</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>0.094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.241)</td>
<td>(0.231)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrol</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>0.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.138)</td>
<td>(0.100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detective</td>
<td>−0.112</td>
<td>−0.113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(−0.260)</td>
<td>(−0.264)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−1.196**</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2 =$

|          | 0.259 | 0.293 | 0.102 | 0.304 |

*p ≤ 0.09 > 0.050

* *p ≤ 0.001
departmental affiliation was Collegetown, while administrators served this function for departmental position.

The nine personal-biographical variables alone explain nearly 26 percent of the variance in police solidarity. The most important variables for this regression equation are level of education (EDUC) and years of service (YEARS): The higher the educational level ($\beta = -0.241$) and the greater the number of years as a police officer ($\beta = -0.371$), the lower the police solidarity. Police solidarity was not related in a statistically significant fashion to age, gender, departmental affiliation or departmental position.

Model 2 adds the level of professionalism (PROFSSNL) to the nine personal-biographical variables. This model suggests that the effects of educational attainment and education are largely unaffected by the level of professionalism supported by the officers. However, professionalism itself is inversely related to police solidarity ($\beta = -0.196$): The higher the level of professed professionalism, the lower the police solidarity. Adding PROFSSNL to the equation increased the explained variance by slightly more than 3 percent, up to 29.3 percent from 25.9 percent.

Whatever we learned about police solidarity was derived from educational attainment and years of service. The fact that well-educated officers are low in police solidarity is not entirely surprising: these officers may feel less constrained by the ideals of an isolated group. However, that newer officers rather than the more experienced officers espouse a solidarity orientation was unexpected. Perhaps in this sample of officers, the norms of solidarity provided a benchmark for the newer officers that was less important to more experienced ones. If this is the case, we may have to rethink the concept of police solidarity, at least as operationalized for this study.

Table 2 also contains an examination of police professionalism as the dependent variable. However, the personal-biographical variables (Model 1) yield few insights into the level of reported police professionalism ($R^2 = 0.102$). None of the contributions made by the various independent variables was statistically significant. Adding COPSOLID to the equation (Model 2) had two main effects. First, the explained variance increased dramatically ($R^2 = 0.304$), largely on the strength of COPSOLID ($\beta = -0.234$): The greater the level of adherence to values of police solidarity, the lower the endorsement of professional police values. Second, the effects of two variables approached statistical significance, defined for this study as a probability level of less than 0.10.
but greater than 0.05. The better educated officers and those serving in Boomtown reported lower levels of police professionalism than less educated officers and officers serving in the other communities.

Clearly, COPSOLID contributes more to our understanding of PROFSSNL than is true of the reverse case. That is, while COPSOLID is best understood in terms of who the officers are, PROFSSNL is best understood not in terms of who they are, but how they feel about the appropriateness of police solidarity.

SUPPORT FOR TRADITIONAL POLICING AND COMMUNITY POLICING

We did not indicate to the officers that there was a finite amount of money nor that whatever was spent on one activity would mean less for the others. Rather, we simply asked them to indicate how much of the department’s resources should be spent on each activity, with five response categories ranging from none to a very large amount. The summated scales were normed to the same range of responses. The mean for COPWORK was 3.78 (high moderate), while COMWORK’s mean was 3.21 (low moderate). A paired-response t-test examination of these two scales revealed that the officers in this study support significantly higher expenditures for COPWORK as compared to COMWORK ($t = 11.91; df = 161; p < 0.001$). In an absolute sense, officers supported the expenditure of low moderate to high moderate amounts of departmental resources on both sets of activities; however, traditional police work received significantly higher levels of support than community service activities.

The factor analysis revealed that the officers view community police activities and traditional police activities as two separate but related aspects of policing. The $t$-test analysis indicated that officers support significantly different amounts of departmental resources to these two activities. The final research question inquires as to the extent to which prioritization of community policing and traditional policing is tied to police solidarity and professionalism.

Given the reclusive and exclusive nature of the police subculture, along with its putatively high levels of occupational solidarity, it seems likely that community policing will be downplayed by police with high solidarity. Those officers with highly ethical work practices, on the other hand, should only be concerned with doing the job, not in how or where
it is accomplished. Indeed, Table 3 reveals partial support for these hypothesized relationships. First, in terms of community policing, Model 1 suggests that two variables are important. Education is inversely related to the expenditure of funds on community policing activities ($\beta = -0.179$), and professionalism is positively related to support for community policing ($\beta = 0.163$). The former was unexpected, while the latter is consistent with both the professionalism and community policing literature. Nonetheless, the nine-variable solution only accounts for roughly 11 percent of the variance in support for community policing activities.

Adding support for traditional policing activities (COPWORK) to the nine personal-biographical variables, COPSOLID, and PROFSSNL, results in nearly three times the explained variance ($R^2 = 0.308$). Given the fact that the correlation coefficient and standardized regression coefficients for COMWORK and COPWORK are nearly identical ($r = 0.450$, versus $\beta = 0.472$), it would appear that most of COPWORK’s effect on COMWORK is both positive and direct. The direct effects of EDUC and PROFSSNL in the second model only approach statistical significance, and they are joined by COPSOLID: Higher levels of support for community policing activities were expressed by police officers with lower educational levels, lower support for police solidarity orientations, and higher levels of police professionalism. Above all, however, high support for community policing activities was related to high levels of support for traditional police work.

Table 3 also examines correlates of support for traditional policing activities. The results are at once similar to and different from those obtained for community policing. In terms of similarities, the explained variance was again low ($R^2 = 0.102$). However, one variable makes a significant contribution: Members of the Boomtown police force indicated significantly lower levels of support for traditional policing activities than was the case for officers serving in the other forces ($\beta = -0.208$). Moreover, detectives were somewhat more enthusiastic about traditional policing activities than officers in other work positions ($\beta = 0.166$), but the effects are just outside the level traditionally required for statistical significance ($p = 0.07$).

Adding COMWORK to the previous model alters the equation in several ways. First, the explained variance is considerably higher for this equation ($R^2 = 0.304$, versus $R^2 = 0.102$). Second, Boomtown officers continued to exhibit levels of support for traditional policing activities that were significantly lower than those exhibited by other officers. Third,
Table 3
SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY POLICING AND TRADITIONAL POLICING ACTIVITIES WITH STANDARDIZED REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS AND, IN PARENTHESES, UNSTANDARDIZED COEFFICIENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Community Policing Activities</th>
<th>Traditional Policing Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>–0.042</td>
<td>–0.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(–0.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.087)</td>
<td>(0.094)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>–0.179**</td>
<td>–0.129*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(–0.150)*</td>
<td>(–0.109)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boomtown</td>
<td>–0.096</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(–0.149)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oiltown</td>
<td>–0.082</td>
<td>–0.104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(–0.137)</td>
<td>(–0.175)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unified</td>
<td>0.142</td>
<td>–0.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.249)</td>
<td>(–0.145)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrol</td>
<td>–0.064</td>
<td>–0.073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(–0.081)</td>
<td>(–0.093)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detective</td>
<td>–0.014</td>
<td>–0.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(–0.023)</td>
<td>(–0.155)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity</td>
<td>–0.149</td>
<td>–0.144*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.107)</td>
<td>(–0.103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>0.163**</td>
<td>0.139*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.161)</td>
<td>(0.138)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMWORK</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPWORK</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0.472***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.602)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.308</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p ≤ 0.09 > 0.05  
**p ≤ 0.05 > 0.001  
***p ≤ 0.001
the effects for detectives were statistically significant ($p = 0.05$): Detectives supported higher levels of spending for traditional policing activities than officers in other work positions. Finally, the standardized coefficient for COMWORK is nearly identical to the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.450$, versus $\beta = 0.475$). The impact of these two variables on one another would appear to be direct and independent: Officers who support higher expenditures for one type of activity also support similar expenditures for the other. In other words, they do not view resource allocation as a case of being either for one or the other, but rather as a case of increasing the level of funding for both.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

This article represents an attempt to describe the level and sources of support for traditional and community policing activities among the police in relatively small to medium sized police departments in New Mexico. The findings may not generalize to larger departments; there may also be some uniqueness to departments that operate in relative geographic isolation from one another, as is often the case in states like New Mexico, North and South Dakota, Montana, or Idaho to name a few. Having issued that caveat, the focus of this article was on the extent to which police officer support for traditional and community policing activities in these communities was related to their occupational solidarity or professionalism, the latter measured by support for ethical conduct in the workplace. With few exceptions, we found that:

- Police solidarity was best understood in terms of who the officers were (the higher the level of education and the greater the years of service as a police officer, the lower the police solidarity), while police professionalism was best understood in terms of how officers felt about the appropriateness of police solidarity (the higher the police solidarity, the lower the level of police professionalism).

- Police officers in this study viewed traditional police activities and community police activities as two separate but related aspects of police work. Moreover, they supported the expenditure of significantly higher amounts of departmental resources on the former over the latter; however, this second finding should not be
taken to mean that they are unsympathetic to community policing goals since the level of funding recommended for both activities was at least moderate.

- Generally speaking, support for traditional policing is directly related to support for community policing, and vice versa.

- Besides the strong mutual effects of support for community policing and traditional policing on each other, the former is also correlated with educational level and level of professionalism: the higher the educational level, the lower the support for community policing activities and the higher the level of professionalism, the higher the level of support for community policing. For its part, traditional policing is best understood in terms of location and departmental position; members of the Boomtown department exhibited lower levels of support for traditional policing activities than officers in other departments and detectives more than other ranks supported traditional policing activities.

These findings suggest directions for police departments similar to those included in this study that are wrestling with resource allocation and community policing issues. First, between solidarity and adherence to professional ethical standards, the former may be more important than the latter for understanding officer support – or lack of support – for community policing. While both variables contribute roughly equal amounts to community policing, solidarity is far more important to our understanding of police professionalism than is true of the reverse; not only does police solidarity have a direct impact on community policing equal to that of police professionalism, as judged by the standardized regression coefficients, it also has a considerable indirect effect on police professionalism. The relatively ineffective role played by endorsement of professionalism in understanding police practices is also supported by the literature. For example, Crank et al. (1993) reported that police professionalism had little effect on antipathy toward due process, the code of secrecy, and the use of “street justice” to resolve citizen confrontations. Thus, departments with aspirations for community policing programs may have to worry more about officers who exhibit high levels of solidarity than officers with low levels of professionalism. Efforts to garner support for community policing should also focus on the contributions of the better educated and older officers, or those less prone
to exhibit high levels of police solidarity. Second, given the strong, independent effects of the two forms of policing on one another, any policy intended to strengthen community policing should not be seen as taking resources away from traditional policing activities. In the hypothetical situation we included in the survey instrument, there was no indication that the respondents had to balance increases and decreases. Given the higher priority the officers attach to traditional policing, any attempt to “take from Peter to pay Paul” could lead to resistance on their part toward any community policing program. A possible explanation for the higher levels of support for traditional policing may be that organizations continuously place much emphasis on this type of training within the police academy and in subsequent training (Van Maanen, 1973b:410). Additionally, officers may find it more rewarding to make “a good bust”, rather than to solve some type of ongoing community problem. As Van Maanen, (1973c:223) has observed, officers probably see themselves as crime fighters in search of “real police work” not as social workers (see Walker, 1992:62).

Finally, educational level is inversely related to both police solidarity and support for community policing activities, although in the latter case, the inclusion of support for traditional policing activities resulted in a diminution of education’s impact. The fact that well-educated officers are less supportive of police solidarity is consistent with the goals of higher education. However, the observation that these same officers are less supportive of community policing sends a bad message to administrators looking for personnel to implement such programs. It could be that college-educated officers are cynical about “innovative policing programs”. If this is the case, then perhaps it is further evidence that college degrees have failed to deliver on the promise of the Report by the President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, when police recruiters were instructed to seek “quality” by scouring the nation’s college campuses and take whatever steps necessary to recruit and retain college graduates (1967:107-111). College education, in point of fact, may make certain law enforcement tasks more difficult rather than easier, perhaps due to critical thinking skills emphasized in many academic programs (see Dantzker, 1994; Griffin et al., 1978; Kayode, 1973; Miller and Fry, 1976; Vogel and Adams, 1983). This observation should not be taken as a call to abandon efforts at recruiting college-educated officers. Instead, it is meant to serve as a caveat against the assumption that college graduates will more easily “buy into” community policing than officers with less education.
This study provides an exploratory look at support for both community policing and traditional policing in one state’s small to medium sized police departments. We suggest that additional state-level studies are needed in order to determine the generality of our observations. Being smaller and relatively isolated does not necessarily translate directly into closer knit and community oriented. The officers in the non-metropolitan departments we studied resembled their large-city counterparts. The implications for community policing, therefore, are problematic: if police officers serving communities that are relatively isolated and insulated cannot unequivocally support community policing goals, who can?

NOTE

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