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Resource Organization, Mobilization, and Control: A South Western Ontario Law Enforcement Perspective

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RESOURCE ORGANIZATION, MOBILIZATION, AND CONTROL:

A SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSPECTIVE

by

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ABSTRACT

The current research study set out to examine and understand how rank and file police officers perceive their workplace practices as organized, mobilized and controlled. The impetus for research is to better appreciate the network form of organization and the way in which knowledge flow is exercised in the distribution of policing resources and the ordering of practice. Concepts of nodal governance and structuration theory establish a framework that is developed to understand rank and file police officer workplace practice in an organizational sense. It is argued that the traditional role of the rank and file police officer has become ambiguous as a multiplicity of agents and agencies are involved in the delivery of policing services. Therefore, it is imperative to consider how knowledge flow produces and reproduces the policing structure through the actions of rank and file police officers as they begin to understand the current environment of police work. Data are derived from interviews with rank and file police officers located in South Western Ontario, Canada.

Keywords: network, knowledge worker, Nodal Governance, Structuration Theory

DEDICATION

To Milan, Zorica, Matthew, and Mark,

for your love

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INTRODUCTION

As a form of organization, it has been suggested that the network structure provides the capacity for effective and efficient forms of resource mobilization and management (see Castells 1996; 2003), facilitating collaborative advantages in "resource coordination and communication" (Grasenick, Wagner, and Zumbusch 2008:298). The transfer of resources (i.e., knowledge, technology, social services) through the network facilitates the capacity for agents to leverage and mobilize these resources, which in turn orders and (re)produces structure and practice (de Lint 2006)[1]. The reproduction of structure and practice is accomplished as the resources used through the network are the very elements that assist to create the network. Because social practice and social order require situation-based knowledge(s) deployed by agents engaging in social action (see Stehr 2007), the utilized resources maintain their own discourse and operational procedure which contribute to the formation of the network.

With regard to the organization, mobilization and control of important policing resources, there is strong evidence for the existence of a misunderstanding in modern policing scholarship (de Lint 2003; Ericsson and Haggerty 1997). The traditional role of the rank and file police officer as crime fighter has become ambiguous or insufficient as a variety of agents and agencies are involved in the delivery of policing services. The police 'monopoly' on crime control and order maintenance is challenged as the distribution of policing resources occurs through a number of other agents or agencies (see Wright 2002).

There is a need to expand on the analysis of how networks and knowledge flow mediate the actions of police officers. As policing has generally been analyzed as

[1]Discussions with Dr. Willem de Lint.

hierarchal and closely associated with bureaucratic systems of control (see Loader 2000), the efforts taken by those who have evaluated network structures in a law enforcement context have generally considered network and knowledge flow relative to notions of cohesion, range, loyalty, and density[2] (Reagans and McEvily 2004) or how knowledge that is distributed from the police service is practically applied by police officers[3] (Badiru, Mathis, and Holloway 1988). A problem commonly found with network analysis is its failure to recognize the importance of determining agents' identities or positions through the network, "thereby blurring the boundaries between agents and their links" (Dupont 2006:167). There has also been a lesser focus on the relationships of external actors (social service partners, public liaison agents, private police officers) and how they contribute to crime control and order maintenance efforts (see Giacomantonio 2011).

The present study utilizes theoretical conceptualizations of nodal governance (see Burris, Drahos, and Shearing 2005) and structuration theory (see Giddens 1984) to shed light on how rank and file police officers perceive their workplace practice as organized, mobilized and controlled. Nodal governance provides insight into how agents comprise the network organization, how these agents are governed, and how they govern other agents (Burris et al. 2005:54). In turn, structuration theory (Giddens 1984) enables an account of how social practice is structured and ordered across time and space within the context of established norms and rules. Combining nodal governance and structuration theory allows for an analysis to better appreciate the network form of organization and the way in which knowledge flow is exercised in the distribution of policing resources and the ordering of practice. Using qualitative data from interviews with rank and file

[2]See R. Reagans and B. McEvily 2004, for an analysis of the component parts that comprise to affect information distribution.
[3]See A. Badiru, J. Mathis, and B. Holloway 1988, for an account of technological applications of expert systems.

police officers from South Western Ontario, the research examines how rank and file police officers perceive the policing organizational structure, that is, which agents and agencies are involved, and what is characteristic of modern police work within a knowledge-based network setting.

For the purposes of this research, policing is conceptualized as a network arrangement where police officers act as knowledge workers (Brodeur and Dupont 2006) and are 'always and everywhere' (Giddens 1995:265) connected to crime control and order maintenance agents and agencies, while continually negotiating knowledge(s). The value of this exploration is to identify the capacities of these diverse knowledge(s), as a resource and mechanism, facilitating the (re)production of structure and practice. The significance of this is that "the governance of social practice is increasingly accomplished through knowledge flow" (de Lint, O'Connor, and Cotter 2007:42) and practices that reproduce knowledge flow are necessary to understand for the enablements and constraints faced by rank and file police officers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Network in an Information Age

With the purported shift in directorial arrangements from bureaucratic forms of organization to network forms of association and communication, networks have proliferated as effective resource mobilization initiatives (Castells 1996). This contemporary shift is evident in "just in time (JIT) servicing" (Frazier, Spekman, and O'Neal 1988:53) where "production for order rather than production for stock" (Shipman 2001:332) are seen as essential to business organization. The network is emerging as the signature form of organization in this information age, just as the bureaucracy highlighted

the industrial age (Agranoff and McGuire 1999). Social practice can now be characterized as a result of conditioning by network arrangements (Castells 2000), which are comprised of nodes and links that enable the mobilization of resources, such as the transfer of knowledge.

A network is by definition an "instrument of cooperation and competition" in which each node needs every other node to function (Castells 2000:153). Networks are "flexible, adaptive structures that can perform any task that has been programmed into the network" (Castells 2000:154). A network system is made of nodes (sites) and links (relationships); a node represents a mentality or strategy and commands action from other nodes connected by links. Not to confuse a node with a field (see Bourdieu 1984)[4], nodes operate based on their activities designated to them by their position within the network, while a field, is a *system* of social positions structured internally in terms of power relationships (Bourdieu 1984). Links connect related nodes, specify the nature of relationship, and act as a cross-referencing point. A fully articulated link is identified by the "pair of nodes it connects, the order of the node pair which defines the direction and the type of relationship" (Gill 2006:28). A network is an open social structure operated by information technologies "that generate, process, and distribute information on the basis of the knowledge accumulated in the nodes" (Castells and Cardoso 2005:7). The relationships expressed between the various actors constitute the network and its structural properties are determined by the relational ties that exist (Baker 2010).

In conjunction with contemporary propositions that signal the decline of hierarchical social structures and the rise of horizontal networks (see Castells 1996;

[4]A field is a location in which agents and their social positions are located. Fields are hierarchical in nature and a social arena of conflict over the appropriation of capital/resources (Bourdieu 1984). In contrast, nodes are not necessarily hierarchical in nature. Nodes are agents, clients, and ideas in themselves and not a site for agents to act based on their social position.

2003), modern policing can be seen as operating through a myriad of networked relationships (Wright 2002). This means a set of "institutional, organizational, communal or individual nodes that are interconnected in order to authorize or provide security to the benefit of stakeholders" (Dupont 2004:78). Police networks are formed by the actors and initiatives that collectively align for crime prevention and the preservation of social order (de Lint 1999; Dupont 2004), while facilitating and maintaining exchange points between nodes which mobilize police resources, such as knowledge.

Generally, law enforcement networks have been researched in three ways. The first is the 'compulsory networking' model which suggests that the impetus to collaborate and share knowledge derives from either state or non-state security stakeholders (see O'Malley 1991). The second is a 'non-state compulsory networking' model (Ericson and Haggerty 1997). These networks tend to be risk-based and develop between state and non-state agents through a convergence of interests in risk related information (see Beck 1992; 1996; 2009; Ewald 1993; 2000)[5]. A third framework involves the concept of trust networks (Tilly 2004)[6]; the amount of trust procured by agents will note the ways in which information is transferred through the network (Tilly 2004). The significance is that police officers are constantly connected as nodes by links attempting to mobilize policing resources (see Dupont 2006; Lippert and O'Connor 2006). Such organizational arrangements enable resources (police action, knowledge, and technology) to flow which in turn influences police officer action (Rulke and Galaskiewicz 2000).

[5] Corporate security programs typically perceive the governance of security as the management of risk and deploy security-related information to account for such risks.

[6] With regard to trust networks, the usefulness and ability of governmental agencies to provide resources for each other is contingent upon the voluntary exchange, through trust, of private into public goods.

'Knowledgeable' Nodes of Influence

The sense of agency experienced by police officers relates not to the intentions one has in taking action but in the actual capability of acting in the first place (Giddens 1984). Such action per se is conditioned on the mediation between mandated institutional instructions on the one hand and cultural, ontological experiences on the other. Action manifests as the agent negotiates between perceived instructions and individual heuristics (Ericson 2007). With regard to commands and cognitive shortcuts, law enforcement agents may not always be autonomous or 'free' from external influences when deciding how to act (see Gill 2002). For instance, police networks can "harness resources available in local communities in order to overcome complex crime problems that find origins in deteriorating social conditions" (Brodeur 2007:79). 'The community' is one such illustration of a nodal point of reference that may influence police agents' social practice.

Community Orientated Policing (COP) is a co-production initiative that, while involving consultation with citizens, retains the position of the police as know-how bearers of security expertise and public interest concerns (Shearing and Wood 2003a; Tilly 2003). Based on the notion that community interaction and assistance can facilitate the control of crime and a reduction in fear, COP is an organizational strategy that supports the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving strategies in dealing with crime and social (dis)order (de Lint 2006). When considering the perceived sense of agency experienced by police officers, 'the community' node will attempt to influence, direct, and motivate certain practices over others. COP illustrates the formation of links between the police service and community members to "help identify suspects, detain offenders, and by bringing additional information to the attention of police" (Herbert

2001:447). What is important to note is that the network may facilitate various types of resource mobilization initiatives and these may take the form of any action or strategy relevant to the organization of the network.

Insurance companies provide another illustration of a nodal point of reference which attempts to mobilize policing resources. In this sense, a notion of risk as a strategy for practice has been applied to insurance policy. Risk strategies are concerned with the future and the safety of individuals and attempt to minimize risk by pre-emptive action (see Beck 1992; Mythen 2005)[7]. The application of these principals by insurance companies necessitates the collection and analysis of information by police agents through "the systematic surveillance of those deemed at risk or likely to cause risk" (Gundhus 2005:135). Insurance companies require police officers to collect and transfer actionable information (knowledge) "that is of value to their own strategic course of action" (Ericsson and Haggerty 1997:70). Police officers will be influenced by the relationship they have with the insurance node, for instance, property damages (vehicle, house) will demand knowledge flow through checklist forms of information signaling the nature of the incident and follow-up required (Ericson 2007). Therefore, regardless of the philosophical mandate offered (COP, risk management)[8]; knowledge facilitates the capacity for multiple nodes to mobilize resources from police officers that is relevant to their own forms of management and security provision (Ericson 1994; 2007; Haggerty and Ericson 2006).

[7] Risk as discourse is a way of representing the world, not as an overarching condition or set of events that engulfs the social; ironically risk does just that.

[8] Police officers' working with the courts and court services is another example of nodal influence. When agents from the court system make a request to police for additional information, this influences police agents' social practices based on the interests of the node(s).

Resource Mobilization and the Knowledge Worker

Moving past conceptions of network and 'involved' agents, knowledge is a mechanism for action when directing police officer workplace practice (Stehr 2007). To conceptualize, data is simply observations about phenomena; information is data that will make a difference when utilized, whilst "knowledge is a state of mind, an object, a process, or a capability" (Stehr 2007:143). Data then is the embedded information observed at the site in question, while information is the uniquely constructed packet distributed through the network; knowledge is information that is actionable and can be described as a "state or fact of knowing, with knowing being a condition of understanding gained through experience" (Alavi and Leidner 2001:109). Knowledge is what "makes sense of" the information (de Lint 2006), producing a command to be followed based on a condition of understanding. Knowledge as a mobilizing resource and ordering mechanism provides guidance for action by arranging and categorizing assets through nodes and this actualizes information's potential (see O'Connor, Shields, Ilcan, and Taborsky 2002). This consideration of information and knowledge stresses that these concepts are not mutually exclusive, yet operate within a fluid and flexible course of action.

Policing research has yet to examine how other institutions manage or access the police for knowledge, and how this becomes known at the level of institutions rather than individuals (Brodeur and Dupont 2006). If police officers spend relatively little time on directly protecting persons and property against criminal threats, what else are they doing? An answer is available in viewing police officers as knowledge workers, that is, expert advisors and security managers to other nodes comprising the policing network

(Wood and Dupont 2006). As a goal of policing is to mobilize resources through the collection and transfer of knowledge, officers are being gradually defined by the knowledge they have acquired through their work. This knowledge portfolio allows them to connect with different nodes within the policing network (Carnoy 2001). As police officers participate in knowledge work, one could expect policing to be characterized by an increased role for work teams, a reduction in the number of management levels, and decentralized responsibility within departments (see Lindbeck and Snower 2000).

Police officers through the network are seen as sites of knowledge that have the capacity to function as providers (Wood, Shearing and Froestad 2011). These knowledge workers (Brodeur and Dupont 2006), have four distinct features: *mentalities*, ways of thinking about the security concerns police agents seek to govern; *technologies*, methods for exerting influence over security events; *resources*, such as knowledge flow; and *institutions*, which provide habitual organized forms of operation that mobilize resources. Knowledge work is not only accomplished by the traditional police officer but is now driven by the needs of external institutions, which are connected to the law enforcement network for more knowledge about specific populations (Ericsson and Haggerty 1997). Police mobilization is not only a matter of intervention, but a reaction to network obligations for more knowledge. It is through the network that external institutions are routinely able to access the police for knowledge that is useful for their own security management initiatives (de Lint 2003). The challenge now is how to leverage police officer knowledge capital (Brown and Brudney 2003) and make sense of mobilized knowledge while bringing it to bear on the problems identified by the police network (de Lint 2000; Gottschalk 2006).

While existing research has conceptualized and studied the police officer as knowledge worker (Brodeur and Dupont 2006), it has done so in very narrow terms. The emphasis has been on knowledge production rather than knowledge distribution. There is a lack of information pertaining to how the lowest ranks use their discretion and function as gatekeepers to the police organization (Brodeur and Dupont 2006). It is the object of this research to understand how rank and file police officers perceive their workplace practices as organized, mobilized and controlled. The significance of this research is to better appreciate the network form of organization and the way in which knowledge flow is exercised in the distribution of policing resources and the ordering of practice.

THEORETICAL APPLICATION

Nodal Governance and Structure Reproduction

As the term ‘network’ has become a fashionable word in a number of scientific disciplines in recent years, particular attention is given to an understanding of network governance as a form of practice that structures action in ways other than those structured by hierarchies or markets (Borzel 1998). Nodal Governance blurs the boundaries of public and private, where governance functions are devolved to other agencies and agents, the net result can be viewed as a 'pluralization' of governance where authority of government has been displaced to other viable nodes (Shearing and Wood 2003a; Stoker 1998). This ‘pluralization’ has given rise to the fragmentation and diversification of service provision, ushering in a plethora of nodes each with their own particular strategy for the delivery of resources (see Loader 2000). Today, the governance of policing can be viewed as regionalized where multiple nodes within wider networks of security contribute to the influence and direction of rank and file police officer practice.

Nodal governance is an elaboration of contemporary network (see Castells 1996; 2003) and governance theory (see Borzel 2009; Burris et al. 2005) that explains how a variety of actors operating within social systems "interact along networks to govern the systems they inhabit" (Burris et al. 2005: 33). Nodal governance facilitates the mobilization of resources by ordering mechanisms that are engaged in the deployment of command (Crawford 2006). In this sense, nodal governance directs attention to the nodes (institutions, agents, technologies,) through which these social resources mobilize (Burris et al. 2005). As a form of control, nodal governance provides the capacity for nodes to establish particular strategies that direct or motivate others to act through the mobilization of resources.

Perspectives of nodal governance situate nodes within wider networks of security (nodal arrangements). Nodes may become "entrenched for considerable periods in many places, but this should be regarded as a state of affairs rather than constant" (Shearing and Wood 2003:404). Nodes attempt to channel knowledge, generate rules and enforce sanctions pertaining to actors and organizations (Stehr 2007)[9]. A nodal governance perspective enables a view of the ebb and flow of governing interactions across networks and through nodes of influence (Wright and Head 2009). Mapping the social relations and parameters as described by rank and file police officers (see Cross and Parker 2004) may in turn lead to a better understanding of how nodal arrangements operate and collaborate through the transfer of knowledge.

As knowledge links and mobilizes resources, "knowledge makes possible the (re)production of social practice" (Giddens 1984:21). Knowledge as a form of power manifests itself as a relation either of individuals or of structures (Brocklehurst 2001).

[9] See Nico Stehr 2007, for a valuable account of knowledge and its contemporary role in society.

Keeping in mind that power is manifested as the capacity to change the practice of an agent, "power is never *merely* a constraint but is at the very origin of the capabilities of agents to bring about action" (Giddens 1984:173). As organizations control mobilizable resources that in turn become increasingly relevant to the formulation and implementation of public policy (Borzel 1998; Wood 2004), the significance of creating policy resides within what each node is enabled to mobilize, what degree of power does each node maintain, and how do nodes receive and transfer resources for purposes of implementation.

Anthony Giddens (1984) and the theory of structuration provides another theoretical starting point concomitant to nodal governance to investigate resource mobilization and the structuring of social practice. As human societies would plainly not exist without human agency, that is, the power to reflect and negotiate between competing knowledge(s) when deciding how to act, it is not the case that actors simply create networks, agents reproduce or transform them, remaking what is already made.[10] "Human social activities are not brought into being by social actors but continually recreated by them" (Giddens 1984:2); the production of social practice is also one of reproduction, referring to the capacity of individuals for self-reflection and action (Giddens 1984) in the contexts of the day-to-day enactment of social life. "In reproducing structural properties, agents also reproduce the conditions that make such action possible" (Giddens 1984:16), it is the self-reflexive form of the knowledgeability of human agents that is most deeply involved in the recursive ordering of social practice. This model for action involves treating the self-reflexive monitoring of actors as embedded sets of

[10] Agency refers not to the intentions people have in doing things but "to their capability of doing those things in the first place" (Giddens 1984:9).

processes within structures of rules and resources (Giddens 1984). That is, actors practice self-reflexivity by monitoring the flow of their activities and reflecting upon it, as well, they expect others to do the same when accounting for the actions taken of others (Giddens 1984).

Structure has no existence independent of knowledge that agents have about what they do in their daily activities (Giddens 1984). Ultimately action and structure progressively fashion each other in a reciprocal manner by knowledge flow. The structuration of social practice means studying the sites and events where agents and structures interact (the duality of structure) to produce and reproduce the network organization through interaction (Giddens 1984). As humans have the capacity to be self-reflexive and review their actions in light of new knowledge, it is this individual subjectivity (see DeSanctis and Poole 1994; Giddens 1991) that enables one to act based on their interpretation of the phenomena in question.

Every observed form of governance is a human invention, or more accurately, a perpetual reinvention through interaction (Borzel 2009; Shearing and Wood 2003b). The qualitative approach taken here is process-oriented focusing on the substance of these interactions between rank and file police officers and the environments in which they find themselves. As knowledge is a network resource and a means of network structure, which enables the reproduction of relations (links) through interaction, knowledge also controls (ordering) the mobilization of resources by nodes (nodal practices). The significance of this research is to better understand how rank and file police officers perceive their workplace practices as organized, mobilized and controlled, while appreciating the ways

in which knowledge flow is exercised in the distribution of policing resources and the ordering of practice.

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The Active Interview

This research is primarily concerned with how rank and file police officers perceive their workplace practice as organized, mobilized and controlled, while appreciating the ways in which knowledge flow is exercised in the distribution of policing resources. The following research questions shed light on rank and file workplace perceptions: How do rank and file police officers perceive their workplace practice as organized? How is knowledge flow exercised in the mobilization of policing resources and which mechanism(s) assist to control rank and file action? What enablements or constraints are experienced when called to duty? These questions, in addition to other probing questions *(see Appendix)*, are investigated through an active interview technique between the researcher and participant, while concomitantly, an egocentric stance to network analysis is utilized to understand how networks facilitate and constrain practice while accounting for the nodes and links established through data collection.

Active interviewing is a project for producing meaning related to phenomena or events in question established between the researcher and participant (see Denzin and Lincoln 2008; see Holstein and Goldberium 1995). The active interview allows for the researcher and participant to come together and discuss what is believed to be significant for interview purposes. This is done as the researcher and participant negotiate through the questions and answers of the interview (Holstein and Goldberium 1995). The active

interview method releases the researcher and participant from any restraint while discussing rank and file practice, this occurs as the information offered by the participant is continually developed in relation to the ongoing interview dynamic; the participant guides the interview as it unfolds through their responses and is constituted in relation to the developing contexts of the interview (Holstein and Goldberium 1995:15). Other interview methods tend to standardize a guideline for conducting interviews, accompanied by formulated and scripted research questions (Holstein and Goldberium 1995). The active approach allows the researcher and participant to continually develop and traverse through what is considered important by the participant through the interview process.

In addition to the active interview technique, an approach to collecting network data is focused on the egocentric stance of collection (see Reagans and McEvily 2003). In order to incorporate the social dimensions of the organization, mobilization and control of rank and file practice, the research took into account "the existing structures of social relations represented in the individual's networks, for it is within these social relations that structure and interaction decisions are made and can be highlighted upon" (Carrasco, Hogan, Wellman and Miller 2008:962). Each individual participant in this case, from their point of view in the network, responds to a series of questions (*see Appendix*), relating to rank and file network organization and practice. The egocentric method enables an account of the policing organization and its affects on rank and file practice by analyzing existing social structures as a set of actors (nodes) and relationships (links) that connect one another (see Tindall and Wellman 2001).

Thus, two key components define the egocentric paradigm: actors, who represent different entities, such as groups or organizations; and relationships or ties, which represent flows of resources that can be related with aspects of control, dependence, cooperation, information interchange, and competition (Carrasco et al. 2008). The core concern of the egocentric analysis is to understand how social structures facilitate and constrain opportunities, behaviours, and cognitions (Carrasco et al 2008). Strength of the egocentric technique is that "it asks an individual to *report on that part of the network* which they are most familiar with" (Reagans and McEvily 2003:252) and participant responses shed light on which individuals and what processes exist in the participant's network. It is important to treat participant accounts as significant data points with figurative language and their own logic (Ericson 2007), which offers an in-depth, detailed and thick description (Holstein and Goldberium 1995) of the experiences presented.

Using collected data through the active interview and egocentric technique permits a view of the relationships that exist that tap into the composition of the network organization, as a valid and reliable account of the formed associations experienced (Marsden 1990; 2000). The research questions asked are general in nature (*see Appendix*), while the direction of the interview is based on the discretion of the participant through the active interview and egocentric approach (Holstein and Goldberium 1995). Individual responses are aggregated to provide a description of the network participants find themselves (Reagans and McEvily 2003) and through a process of evaluation and contrast between the two approaches taken, the researcher is able to shed light on perceptions of rank and file organization, mobilization and control, while accounting for the enablements and constraints experienced in knowledge flow activities.

Once study protocol received clearance from the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board, participants were recruited from South Western Ontario municipal police departments. All participants are employed by a law enforcement department and recruited by this criterion, that is, participants had to be currently working for a municipal law enforcement department. Participants are recruited through a non-probability approach in which a chain referral (see Babbie and Benaquisto 2002) method of sampling is employed. Chain referral (snowball sampling) enables the researcher to collect information from participants through a referral process and "it is assumed that these participants are insightful or representative of the phenomena in question" (Babbie and Benaquisto 2002:182).

Originally, the researcher asked one participant for an interview and through the chain referral method, asked the original participant to pass along the research study information (through the use of a letter of information) to other potential participants with the notion that if they are interested, the other participants, they would contact the researcher (through the email address that is listed on the letter of information) and schedule a date and time that is convenient for them. That is, the researcher asked the original participant to chain refer other rank and file police officers, through a letter of information, about an opportunity to participate in a research study that is directed toward understanding rank and file organization and practice. The reason for using this recruitment technique is that when there are individuals who are difficult to reach but have expertise in a specific area (rank and file police officers), such selection procedures enable a richer, more meaningful account of the phenomena in question as these

individuals, by their very links, are connected to similar individuals who have experiences in the area of interest.

There are four interviews in total (this was the total number of participants that agreed to participate in the research study); the average length of an interview was 80 minutes. Interviews were conducted at a site that was comfortable and chosen by the participant (i.e., personal dwelling, coffee shop); only the researcher and participant knew the location and time of the interview. Narrative responses are collected through the use of a digital voice recorder. Interviews are transcribed verbatim. All participants are given a pseudonym to ensure identity and workplace confidentiality (e.g., Interviewee One was renamed 'Sam')[11].

After the interview phase concluded, the researcher attempted to discover "the main problems /solutions identified from the point of view of the participant through analysis" (Stern 1980:22). This involved analyzing the data by applying a system of open coding (see Finfgeld 2003); examining the data line by line and identifying any themes, processes, or concepts that endure (Finfgeld 2003). The codes that endure the open coding phase, by repetition of themes, processes, and concepts, are labeled "substantive codes, because they codify the substance of the data and often use the very words used by the actors" (Stern 1980:21). As data is received, a meta-synthesis technique is utilized where all substantive codes are compiled for review which in turn facilitates the formation of the coded categories that provides an overall account of the themes, processes, and concepts reported (Finfgeld 2003).

[11] A comprehensive portrayal of participant's race, ethnicity, sex, education, and subsequent background information is excluded in order to ensure the confidentiality of participants, institutions and places of employment.

The open coding procedure is the preliminary phase that facilitates the data to be coded into substantive codes which in turn provides a focused account of the substantive codes for category codification. Category codification is significant at this stage for providing a conceptual framework of the data collected. The consolidation of multiple texts in this respect (by multiple participants) becomes part of a larger network of meaning and understanding through which the affects of working as a rank and file police officer in South Western Ontario is illustrated. The central themes, processes, and concepts discussed are further developed from substantive codes to engender the coded categories which in turn provide the main and focused themes, processes, and concepts reported. For instance, the theme 'organization of practice,' 'decentralized makeup,' and 'networkable units' (substantive codes) further developed into the coded category of 'network organization.' Once the coded categories are established, each category is compared and contrasted with each other to provide an account of the themes, processes, and concepts discussed.

Data saturation is when the data set is thought as complete as indicated by *data redundancy* of participant responses in coded categories. Data saturation is reached when the researcher gathers data to the point of diminishing returns, when nothing new is being added (Bowen 2008). Saturation in effect is the point at which no new insights are obtained, no new themes are identified and no issues arise regarding a category of data (Corbin and Strauss 2008). In this context, saturation is considered achieved as the researcher reaches redundancy in sample responses and it is felt that the categories are complete. The coding categories achieving saturation in this research engendered four main themes that are of value to the current analysis, they include: the perceived

organization of policing; knowledgeable nodes of influence; knowledge work as collection and transfer; workplace enablements and constraints.

Any issues arising during the analysis phase of the data that requires clarification by the researcher from the participant for instance, if certain wordings, concepts, or characterizations are unclear or ambiguous, the researcher conducts a member check giving participants an opportunity to provide feedback via email regarding the information presented. This member check and feedback cycle took place within a 14 day period. In this case, participant feedback was non-existent with regard to clarification concerns put forth by the researcher. What is discussed between the participant and researcher during the interview phase maintains itself to the final product.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Rank and File Perceptions of Workplace Practice

Four main themes emerge regarding rank and file perceptions of practice. They perceive: (1) themselves as operating and organized through a network paradigm; (2) many nodes and links with regard to everyday service delivery; (3) working as knowledge workers; (4) multiple enablements and constraints. These themes help frame a discussion of how South Western Ontario rank and file police officers perceive themselves as organized, mobilized, and controlled based on the knowledge work that they do while accounting for the enablements and constraints experienced in the process of service delivery.

Composition of Ontario Police Service Networks

In line with contemporary literature that suggests that the network form of organization provides functional and proficient forms of resource mobilization and

management (Castells 1996; 2003; Grasenick et al. 2008; Wright 2002); narrative accounts put forth by rank and file police officers further the understanding of the network form of organization as a means of effectively ordering and distributing important policing resources. One participant stated that, "my organization was like one big network, each member passing along resources internally to their own units and externally to other police services when needed to assist with daily work" (Sidney). Morgan furthered the notion of network organization by suggesting, "there are so many units now […] where resources [knowledge] can come from all over the place." When asked about the structure of the police department, another participant indicated that:

> we have many different divisions within our police service; we have community services, criminal investigations, school liaison officers, and court services to name a few. Each unit is responsible for contributing their aspect of it to the service (Sam).

Participants establish the notion that the police organization that they are apart of is network structured and connected to many other branches and services in the delivery of crime control and order maintenance. This consideration follows previous research that highlights the network form of organization as the means of distributing policing resources (Agranoff and McGuire 1999), where a plethora of actors and agencies coalesce to provide service when needed (Castells 2000).

Participants indicated that their departments are open, decentralized and networkable to other units and services and such an organizational arrangement enables the steady flow and access to resources (knowledge, other police services,) that are used to assist with day-to-day work. In terms of accessing these resources that are distributed through the network organization, Sidney mentioned that:

> the organization that I work for is very open […] they want to ensure that a patrol officer has access to resources [knowledge] that might benefit them in an investigation. Most of that information is open for our viewing.

Rank and file police officers discuss that the network structure is consistent as the form of organization in resource allocation with regard to their department. Access to resources is available when needed as rank and file police officers exemplify this by the consideration of the 'openness' of their service. This understanding confirms and follows previous research which suggests that the network organization is a decentralized, flexible, and adaptive structure (Castells 2000) that allows for resources and services to flow when ordered (Frazier et al. 1988) between the actors and agencies involved (Baker 2010).

Rank and file police officers also mention how their everyday work includes interacting with other agents and agencies through the network for the interest of the organization. "We constantly work interchangeably with other individuals and units […] all of these different areas kind of help us in our daily work" (Morgan). When asked about the network structure and the multiple agents that consolidate resources for the interest of the organization, it is highlighted that, "our high school liaison officer has to put out a report when working with schools [...] they try to figure out what went wrong in the past and then implement different responses to alleviate the problems experienced" (Sam). These narratives display how such 'systems' form, operate, and maintain themselves in relation to the interests of the organization. Following previous research that suggests the police organization as decentralized and regionalized (Loader 2000), participants mention that the police service that they are associated with had organized

them as open and connected networks within their department and externally with other agents and agencies.

'Knowledgeable' Nodes of the Network Organization

Consistent with previous literature that suggests rank and file police officers are connected to other nodes through links (Wright 2002) in order to authorize or provide security and safety to the benefit of internal and external stakeholders (Dupont 2004); rank and file police officers not only perceive themselves as working within and through a network organization of policing initiatives, but as working with and for other associated nodes. "So somebody that I would work with say from the hospital, ambulance or fire [sic], I am probably going to see them again in the next week or so, so it's all about keeping professional working relationships" (Morgan). This nodal understanding, of the agents and agencies that form the wider network organization, has several important considerations when discussing law enforcement work. As one participant stated while discussing the nature of the network:

> when I start my shift I get my daily instructions from my sergeant at our shift 'parade' [shift briefing], there is all kinds of stuff [knowledge] presented, some are directly related to a case, some are work performance related, and then there is always follow up to do […] so this information comes from all over our department as well as others (Morgan).

Another participant mentioned that, after considering the multiple nodes that form the policing organization, they start their shift by "logging onto the computer; I have a login ID […] which means that everybody working that day has to let management know who is working, what car they're in, what zone they're in for the day" (Casey). Thus, in line with previous research that suggests police networks and officers are collectively aligned for crime prevention and preservation of social order (de Lint, 1999; Dupont 2004), the

current study highlights rank and file police officers and their service as connected to and dependent on a number of other nodes for providing crime control and order maintenance.

When called to duty, it is acknowledged that other nodes will also make up the calls for service. “So I would say that the most common agents or agencies that we work with are the emergency medical services, the fire department, Children’s Aid Services (CAS), crime stoppers, and victims’ services. Generally these would be the most common” (Sidney). When asked why or how other nodes are involved in police work, Morgan explained using the following scenario:

> say there is a house fire, you would think right away that it’s the fire department’s responsibility but then what happens, there’s somebody inside and they need medical treatment then it becomes an ambulance scene. Then what happens if there’s a criminal nature involved, the police will come in to provide assistance. If it’s serious then it becomes other people’s matters as well (Morgan).

Police officers work internally and externally through nodal partnerships by facilitating resource distribution to many other nodes that form the police network. However, what interest of society is acknowledged that mobilizes rank and file police officer action, what information is provided for? As one participant stated, “public and police officer safety is given [as information] by our sergeant as our number one priority and the way to achieve this is by networking with multiple nodes” (Sidney). Sam noted, “while on duty you are connected not just to the department but to a lot of other kinds of units […] so yeah, there are a lot of other different agencies that we work with.” It is not just other nodes present at the site in question, the knowledge of other existing nodes and how they relate to the police network will start a process where rank and file police officers understand how such interactions are to be operated upon:

> first what is expected of me when I arrive to a traffic accident is to update my sergeant and shift mates, let them know what the situation is like, traffic control is the next thing […] now with every accident over $1000 worth of damages, I have to fill out a report and send it to the Ministry of Transportation (MTO). Insurance is also notified and brought into the mix (Casey).

Thus, rank and file police officers are stimulated to act based on the event in question, the knowledge given from other nodes of how to proceed and for what purposes and for whom. These will all influence rank and file action to some degree.

Rank and file police officers perceive themselves to be linked with many nodes when called to service and these links extend to the individuals they are providing security and safety too. The current study parallels previous research which suggests policing as networkable, connecting actors and agencies that facilitate and maintain themselves as exchange points which mobilize police resources (Dupont 2004; Ericson and Haggerty 1997). When asked how rank and file police officers connect themselves to other nodes that assist with everyday occurrences, Sidney reported:

> we will link everything and everyone […] so it's one big network; everybody is pieced together […] so the service in itself is like one big network, with information flowing through.

It is also noted by rank and file police officers how they consider themselves as intertwined with other nodes when called to duty. "We are also connected to many other services and individuals, a lot of investigations, if they are on the federal level, let's say a major fraud or immigration stuff; we will deal with the RCMP or Canadian Border Services" (Casey). The network form of organization frames the mentality of the current context and environment of policing arrangements and initiatives, while a plethora of nodes direct rank and file practice. Thus, in line with previous research, the network

enables resources to flow through nodes by links and this in turn provides the knowledge for rank and file action (Badiru et al. 1988).

Police Work as Knowledge Work

The current study follows previous scholarship which suggests that rank and file police officers act as knowledge workers when called to duty (Brodeur and Dupont 2006) and it is knowledge work that they do when servicing nodes that exist through the network (Stehr 2007). It is apparent after discussions with rank and file police officers that the knowledge work (Brodeur and Dupont 2006) mentality has influenced and even structured the ways in which: they had constructed themselves relative to their position within the network and how knowledge work is to be carried out. At the beginning of their shift, rank and file police officers participate in a shift briefing where knowledge of what to do that day is disseminated by other nodes (e.g., the staff sergeant provides knowledge which is accumulated throughout the service). All respondents acknowledge that this is where instructions for duty are handed out, that is, knowledge flows to the appropriate individuals. "Whoever is starting their shift attends the briefing and at that time your deployment is given out, the cruiser you will be in, what time you will take your break, as well as, any notable calls from your previous shift" (Sam). At this shift briefing:

> the sergeant will also go over what's going on during the day […] or if there is anything that we need to *be on lookout* for (BOLO) […] the information that we get at the shift briefing will be passed on from other members internal to the organization or externally (Casey).

Sidney elaborated on Casey's point by noting:

> many of the BOLO's are directed at certain agencies or areas that need to be policed; for the most part they are sending them [other police officers and services] out to ensure that officers are aware of this information […]

> so at the end of the day if something happens to a police officer they say did you have this information because mostly it's because they want to CYA, that is, cover your ass.

BOLO's are a good example of how information collected at one occurrence can be used at another when needed. This knowledge capital (having particular information and being able to act on it) as a resource, not only legitimates a course of action (i.e., BOLO's directing action) it serves as a mechanism of precaution. It is important that rank and file police officers are given as much knowledge as possible so that when on duty they may 'protect' themselves and the public.

The information collected and transferred by rank and file police officers is for public and officer safety. Knowledge work enables the maintenance of such priorities. When asked about how much of their daily work actually involves collecting, analyzing or distributing information, participants respond that "a lot of our daily work is comprised of information work" (Casey). "So it doesn't matter if its day, afternoon or night, there is always stuff going on, information is being generated" (Morgan). "It's expected that you are collecting information on a daily basis and that you are recognizing and documenting information that would generally be perceived as important" (Sidney). Basically, the reason for such investigative work is because rank and file police officers are "almost 100% of the time the first person on scene, and you got to get that information as quick as you can […] you have to cover the five W's [what,why,when,where,whom], and this helps when trying to evaluate the situation" (Morgan). In response to the question why they collect knowledge, Sidney explained:

> any information provided or gathered is certainly better than not providing or having the information. You never know who might benefit from that information sharing […] so all information, even trivial could be significant.

The importance of and energy spent on knowledge work is paramount to perceptions of rank and file practice and to the way in which occurrences are to be handled and cleared. Considering previous research, knowledge actualizes information's potential (O'Connor et al. 2002) providing a course of action to be followed and it is knowledge work that constitutes the trade of rank and file police officers (Brodeur and Dupont 2006). Participants make clear that knowledge work enables them to conduct and complete investigative work and that all knowledge in itself is important.

As some scholars argue that knowledge work is paramount to contemporary policing initiatives (Brodeur and Dupont 2006; Wood et al. 2011), the current study highlights the importance of knowledge work in relation to everyday practice. Study participants reported that knowledge assists with creating the context and direction for action. Sidney furthered explained the significance of knowledge work:

> I had information regarding an individual trafficking marijuana and a traffic stop was issued by me for a traffic offence and that knowledge, by getting it from a BOLO […] allowed me to form the grounds to arrest that person and subsequently search that vehicle and find a large amount of marijuana. So information sharing is paramount when what I see in the investigation is close to what I believe to be […] and if I didn't have that information, I wouldn't have enough grounds to do what I needed to do to complete an investigation or arrest somebody. That's why knowledge is key.

Rank and file police officers perceive themselves as working within open networks with many different nodes while doing knowledge work to ensure public and police officer safety. This is exemplified by the use of BOLO's, as knowledge collected for one purpose is subsequently used for another. The police officers that have emerged through the network are seen as sites of knowledge that have the capacity to function as providers (Wood et al. 2011) and it is knowledge work that is exemplified as rank and file action

when considering the response to everyday security occurrences (Brodeur and Dupont 2006).

Perceived Rank and File Enablements

Participants report that working as knowledge workers in a networked environment alongside many nodes existing in unison has its enablements. That is, rank and file police officers perceive enhancements in the ability to successfully attend to any occurrence or issue that arises in the course of daily work. Some of the enablements mentioned are: expanded forms of knowledge flow; increased technology; and individual/personalized equipment. These enablements allow rank and file officers to successfully ensure public and police officer safety, while at the same time complete their work obligations. According to Sidney, not only do police officers need "very very very good interpersonal skills to interact and effectively deal with different situations," they also have to have good working relationships with other agents and agencies:

> having a good relationship, for instance with the hospitals helps a lot. If I know the nurses and doctors well and when I bring in a suspect for an examination, if I don't know the nurses or doctors [sic] I may end up waiting for 10 hours for them to see this individual, but if I do know them I can be seen right away, so it helps (Casey).

Morgan noted that, "when called to public shelters, we knowing who is there on site [staff] and having good working relationships with them helps to handle the incident [...] I mean, they can assist me with the work that needs to be done or I can help them too with that stuff." This knowledge capital, having particular access to information about an occurrence where others may not is important to rank and file officers. Especially with whom and how rank and file police officers establish and maintain their knowledge capital with since the time it takes to handle an investigation or to clear an occurrence.

After discussing how knowledge flow in a networked sense is involved in different capacities to handle rank and file obligations, one participant acknowledged how important it is that at the beginning of their shift for the shift briefing to give out as much information as possible. “Anything that we get at shift briefing [sic] will be passed on to many different members. For the most part they are sending this information out to make sure police officers are aware of what’s out there and this in turn helps me do my job” (Sidney). The information that enables rank and file police officers to do their job comes internally from the police department and externally as well. A significant tool mentioned that enables rank and file officers to successfully carry out their tasks are the policing databases:

> The Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC), is a database portal, so Federal, RCMP, Provincial, and Municipal police services all have access to this system. For example, when I run a person on the computer, CPIC provides pages of information and it will say if this person is wanted […] it’s a huge network of information and you can look up several things on a person and it helps to have this information when acting (Casey).

When asked why the database is so important to their work Sam reported that, “when you’re dealing with the same person six times within a year and there making allegations with six different people it’s nice to know where and what kind of situations these people were putting themselves into and what the previous outcomes were.” CPIC in this sense is a resource providing knowledge and a site for knowledge. Rank and file police officers may contribute to this site of knowledge and in turn they may also withdraw resources when needed. CPIC provides the mechanism for agents to network (create knowledge links) and this meditates the actions taken by rank and file police officers.

Systems of knowledge flow and the technology surrounding it allows rank and file police officers to link themselves to the appropriate resources needed to conduct their

daily duties. “We have a pretty good system, where it’s all computer inputted, the information. It doesn’t matter if it’s minor or major [the criminal occurrence in question]; every officer has access to that report now. So technology is an important tool in this case when doing your work” (Morgan). Apart from acknowledging the enablements of knowledge flow to assisting with daily work, many other tools are mentioned:

> when called out, as a tool, I would first check CPIC or our Records Management System (RMS) for a heads up of the environment. I then use my emergency lights, so people can see me and what’s going on. Also the siren if needed. Cones and flares are used to re-direct traffic in a directional way. The radio too, that’s number one that you wear with you at all time. Also working with other agents and agencies are helpful. The fire department is kind of a helpful tool for instance, because we may need to use their truck to block off a lane or traffic. Ambulance, when we need them to carry someone off to the hospital, and the tow-truck is a useful tool, they will help clear up the scene by moving damaged vehicles (Casey).

Nodes involved in the composition of the network are manifest as tools (and resources) in themselves; this is because other nodes provide resources when needed to assist with rank and file work. In addition to the tools mentioned, added benefits experienced by rank and file police officers include research and equipment development:

> you get research work from external companies. For example, in the olden days the hand cuffs and pepper spray cases and all the gear on your belt would all be made in leather material. Well there have been studies that have shown that this material can absorb bodily fluids, so what happens, they do research and it ends up getting exchanged for user friendly belts and accessories (Morgan).

As research has assisted with equipment and accessory developments, the ways in which rank and file police officers conduct their daily routines when dealing with individuals they have come in contact with have also been modified:

> in the past five years they [management] have come out with a form now that we must fill out anytime that we deal with or come in contact with certain individuals. Again it's all information for us […] the form is a street-check form and it helps to create the links between individuals (Sidney).

"There are forms now for everything; every week it seems like they are coming out with new forms to help us collect information" (Casey). The street-check forms not only allow for greater amounts of knowledge flow, the forms also manifest the information collection and linking nature of police work. Each form provides greater amounts of knowledge to rank and file officers, and the forms also direct action as a form of management oversight since what is needed to be done is located within the obligations put forth by the form. Thus, expanded forms of knowledge flow; increased technology; and individual/personalized equipment enable the practice of rank and file police officers when called to service.

Perceived Rank and File Constraints

Participants discuss that when working in a network organization as a rank and file police officer certain constraints exist. That is, particular limitations are acknowledged that hamper rank and file action with regard to the mobilization of resources, the ability to 'freely' decide what to do in a given situation, and how to proceed based on a lack of understanding. Some of the constraints mentioned are: lack of knowledge flow/information sharing practices; coded nodal knowledge; lack or inadequate technology; and the enforcement of particularly 'insensitive' laws, policies, and operational procedures. The constraints mentioned by participants inhibit rank and file officers to effectively guarantee public and police officer safety while hampering

everyday workplace practice. While discussing the importance of knowledge flow as a daily practice, Sidney noted:

> anytime I query somebody, it is absolutely paramount that the information was first of all put on the system [database] correctly by the investigating officer because, I am relying on that information depending on what the occurrence is, to do my job. If that information was not recorded properly, I wouldn't know about it and it might change how I deal with the occurrence.

An understanding of the information recorded in the particular database becomes even more pronounced when limits are presented to information sharing:

> so if you're an officer from another service, you can't just log into London's record management system and read it. For example, when you run a car for information you can see if it's been run in the past four or five days by different agencies, but different agencies will put different remarks, it may be just a bunch of different numbers and letters that really means nothing to me being from a different service (Sam).

Respondents indicate that information sharing between and within police services is constrained by the lack of information available and by the obscurity of information.

Morgan noted that the amount of information generated, or call volume for service, also plays a significant role in knowledge flow activities. "When you're in a busier city working with a larger police service, call volume is a lot higher than say for example smaller departments. There's not always enough officers for the calls." Sam mentioned that, "you don't want to leave calls on the back burner for other calls, but sometimes it just ends up that way when dealing with the different needs at the time." Other variables are mentioned as constraining rank and file practice in relation to knowledge flow. "When you have so many calls that you need to follow up on, a big restraint is time. Sometimes you have to push things over to the next shift" (Sam). When actually dealing with a call, the time spent on collecting and transferring knowledge may

not always be enough, as the information rank and file officers get from each other might be inaccurate or misleading:

> has there ever been officer safety issues, yes, have I been hurt before because dispatch has given me the wrong information yes. For example, I had my dispatch run an address; my dispatch told me that nothing had come up, that everything was 10-60 which means good. But in reality there was something on the system and dispatch had missed giving me that information. I ended up going into the dwelling and was attacked by the individual inside, later I learned that they had a disease. I don't know if they had given me anything, but now I go to the doctors a couple times a year, so a lack of communication therefore can cause officers to get hurt (Casey).

Thus, the accuracy of information, the time spent responding to calls and the lack of knowledge passed, is expressed by rank and file police officers as constraining workplace practice.

Participants also indicate that as they share information, with their and other police services and external agencies, the capacity to broker knowledge is constrained by certain barriers that are embedded within the information sharing structure. "There isn't much done for information sharing with other external agencies because of the *Privacy Act* for instance" (Sidney). When asked to elaborate, Sidney explained:

> there are limitations on what information can be shared between parties, for example, the emergency medical services are not to disclose medical conditions or other things like that which would be beneficial in an investigation […] their patient confidentially is paramount over our police investigation. So it's kind of law, policy and rights that limit the information sharing process and for a majority of things the information that we would find beneficial is constrained or restrained because of, for instance, by the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Morgan further describes how certain nodes (law, policy) constrain action:

> I mean there are certain parameters that you have to work within, you know you just can't be going wild and cracking skulls, you work within certain parameters and laws. Sometimes it's hampered, it's not like stuff on TV […] so sometimes it would be helpful to crack skulls and get the

> job done but you can't because of law and policy, you got to keep your job.

As lack of knowledge is seen as a constraint, the lack of flow between nodes is also seen as problematic due to the depth of information that is available but inaccessible because of entrenched legislation, policy and operational procedures. Thus, participants highlight a number of constraints that affect everyday workplace practice, including but not limited to: lack of knowledge flow/information sharing practices; coded nodal knowledge; lack or inadequate technology; and the enforcement of particularly 'insensitive' laws, policies, and operational procedures such as the *Charter of Right and Freedoms* or the *Privacy Act*.

DISCUSSION

Rank and File Network Governance

The implications these findings have are important to understand when considering the nature of rank and file police officer organization and practice. The network form of organization characterizing the police service, as it is demonstrated throughout the research, engenders network forms of governance, which are different from forms of organization that one finds in hierarchies or markets (Burris et al. 2005:914). This is significant for contemporary conceptualizations of policing research because as noted by participants the network form of organization is perceived as the paradigm in which rank and file police officers locate themselves. The importance of these findings is that contrary to previous scholarship that found police officer organization and behaviour as vertical or hierarchal in nature (Angell 1971), this study challenges such views by indicating that policing arrangements are formed and maintained through network interactions and relationships. Following previous research

(Castells 1996; Loader 2000), participants perceive themselves as operating within decentralized and open forms of networked relationships comprised of nodes, which coalesce to assist with daily operations. Rank and file police officers are 'connected' to other police officers (regardless of status or position) and services throughout Ontario and this is perceived as enabling as it allows rank and file officers to provide adequate and timely responses to calls for service/action[12].

Directive and instruction allocation which outline rank and file practice is said to be delivered to rank and file police officers by different nodes through a police service network (Castells 1996; Lindbeck and Snower 2000). Parallel to previous scholarship, other nodes provide knowledge to rank and file police officers whereby a particular course of action is presented to be followed (Burris et al. 2005; Shearing and Wood 2003a). The institutions and actors involved are autonomous self-governing nodes part of a larger network organization where the capacity to accomplish tasks is achieved by knowledge flow (Stoker 1998) and if knowledge is absent on how to proceed, then the ability to successfully fulfill organizational obligations becomes difficult. If particular pieces of information are absent from what rank and file police officers receive through knowledge flow, possible outcomes are unknown or non-existent based on the brokered information. In this sense, it is important for directive and instruction allocation to include as much knowledge as possible when distributing resources to rank and file police officers.

Governance of rank and file action is maintained and reproduced by directives delivered through the fused nature of demands made by different nodal organizations (Borzel 1998). The current study manifests the fused nature of directive allocation as the

[12] More knowledge flow between and within nodes is recommended by participants to help maintain public and police officer safety.

fire department, CAS, hospital and ambulance department are all mentioned examples of nodal centers, compounded with their own mentalities and strategies affecting rank and file practice. Different nodes demand service from rank and file police officers and this provides the outline for their daily activities (Stoker 1998). The framing of action occurs because of the patterns of interaction in exchange of resources and by the flows of such resources between units (Burris et al. 2005). For instance, CAS will notify police if children need to be removed from a particular dwelling, as well, when police officers are responding to an occurrence, if children are involved CAS will be notified. This is an example of how rank and file agency is influenced by the resource exchange and knowledge flow interplay between nodes within the wider network. Thus, study participants indicate that the network organization connects rank and file police officers to each other throughout the course of their work; their work is also constituted and maintained by the network.

As the network enables public and police officer safety, it also comprises the dominant paradigm for allocating and instructing rank and file police officers. In line with previous research, the network is a source of information, resource and social support (Baker 2010; Shearing and Wood 2003b) for rank and file police officers and maintains itself based on the nodal relations that are involved in information sharing practices. The street-check form is an example of how nodal relations maintain and reproduce the action and structure of rank and file police officers, based on the resources needed to satisfy network arrangements. Following previous research (Burris et al. 2005; de Lint 2003; Giddens 1984), the current study maintains that the reproduction of practice occurs as the network and the agents involved are controlled and regulated through

mechanisms or technologies of nodal governance (knowledge flow by different nodes) which ushers in horizontal forms of instruction and information allocation (Burris et al. 2005; Loader 2000). This consideration of structure and practice reproduction adds weight to previous research that indicates rank and file agents as 'always and everywhere' (Giddens 1984) linked with many nodes, passing along knowledge for the benefit of public and police officer safety (Ericson and Haggerty 1997).

With the governance network, what is brought to light is that rank and file police officers share information, or more specifically partake in knowledge flow activities. Following previous scholarship, rank and file police officers act as knowledge workers when dealing with nodes that form the network organization (Brodeur and Dupont 2006). As presented by participants, the majority of rank and file police officers' daily work involves receiving and passing knowledge along to others with the hope of assisting with daily tasks[13]. Knowledge work in this sense includes collecting, analyzing and disseminating knowledge, while at the same time is characterized as influencing workplace practice. For instance, the high school liaison officer is an example of knowledge worker. As the officer collects and transfers information for network purposes from a school based context, subsequent knowledge flow in turn influences and directs future interaction of the high school liaison officer. What is evident and rehashed by previous literature is that knowledge flow actualizes the potential of rank and file police officers (O'Connor et al. 2002; Stehr 2007) to conduct their daily duties by creating the space in which certain actions may occur.

[13] Recommended by participants is that the constraints placed by laws, policy, and operational procedures should be alleviated to provide an ease of access to knowledge from any node.

The conceptualization of rank and file police officers as knowledge workers follows previous literature in which the knowledge worker collects and transfers knowledge (Brodeur and Dupont 2006); while at the same time is *mobilized as a resource* by knowledge (Burris et al. 2005; de Lint et al. 2007; Giddens 1984). Evident throughout the study is how rank and file police officers conduct themselves according to the information they are receiving and how in turn they transfer this information within the defined boundaries of potential action. While discussing how knowledge mobilizes action and subsequently how action is mobilized as a resource, the BOLO initiatives discussed earlier are an exceptional illustration of how nodal information (from the BOLO) controls action based on a condition of knowing and understanding. When rank and file police officers do act (based on knowledge from the BOLO), subsequent knowledge flow, as a resource, is transferred through the network for future action and this reproduces and structures the context in which to proceed. The potential for action is regulated by the knowledge of a possible course of action that is dependent on the context in question.

The authority to act provided to rank and file police officers can be best described as "a duality of the exercise of power in interaction where the reproduced institutional structures provide the frame for action" (McPhee 2004:130). Knowledge flow stimulates action, but the way in which to proceed is reliant on context (Giddens 1984). The significance of this is that the current study displays the network organization as enabling action through knowledge flow activities and at the same time comprising the dominant paradigm for governing rank and file police officer activity. By predisposing rank and file police officers to particular knowledge flow agendas, the experienced knowledge creates the space for potential action to occur. It is what one can do considering the knowledge

they have to act and potential action is manifest through this (Stehr 2007). As indicated through the study, knowledge flow or having knowledge of a possible course of action will direct the police network, while at the same time influence rank and file agency.

Structuration of the Rank and File Police Network

The knowledge flow capacity of the network, as perceived by participants, maintains the network structure and reproduces the very nature of the network. Considering the reproduction of action and structure, the police network is the means and ends for actions when rank and file police officers are deciding how to act. Following previous research (Giddens 1984), the police network is constituted by human agency and at the same time the very medium of this constitution (Heracleous and Hendry 2000). Rank and file police officers understand to an extent that the ability to provide the capacity for knowledge flow allows them to provide public and police officer safety, while knowledge flow directs them on which elements of public and police officer safety are necessary. In this sense, the current research study highlights a 'duality of structure' (Giddens 1984) "where the fusion of structure and action is the intermediate to praxis" (Joas 1987:18). Thus, the actions taken by rank and file police officers will influence the structure of the network, while in turn, the structural properties of the network reciprocally renders the agency of individuals in a reproductive fashion. Both the structure of the police service and the agency of the police officer enable/constrain particular network formations and organizational arrangements simultaneously.

Following Anthony Giddens (1984) and the concept of the duality of structure, rank and file police officers will collect and transfer knowledge while on duty and this will provide the knowledge for future dealings with similar issues. This duality of

structure (Giddens 1984), the back and forth interplay of rules and resources structuring action through knowledge flow, reproduces subsequent rules and resources for future action. The understanding of reproduction provides an account where the phenomenon in question is structured based on the rules and resources available and also by the very actions taken by rank and file police officers (Joas 1987). The reproductive force of the rule/action interplay demonstrates how such 'systems' form, operate and maintain themselves in relation to the priorities of the organization[14].

As rank and file police officers are 'always and everywhere' receiving contrasting knowledge(s) they must use such knowledge(s) to negotiate a suitable course of action. However, action is not automatic, or a knee jerk response to the stimulus in question. In this sense, if all capability for action in social relations is power, then there is no absolute powerlessness of an actor, even the most dependent and most oppressed can mobilize resources for controlling their situation and the reproduction of their social relations (Giddens 1984). The ability to be self-reflexive (Giddens 1984) in any given event enables rank and file police officers the capacity to act based on previous determinations of the action and knowledge interplay. Self-reflexivity provides a course of action as rank and file officers decide between what is needed, what is known and what is demanded of them by the police service and the nodes that form to create the police network.

With the power to take action based on the knowledge provided and the self-reflexive monitoring of rank and file police officers, discretion is a valuable tool when deciding how to act (Giddens 1991). However, structuring additional policies and procedures outlining rank and file practice; the valuable tool of discretion may become

[14] Participants recommended that to help increase knowledge flow, needed is greater access to and a standardization of all data entry systems.

curtailed or fashioned based on the knowledge-structure interplay. When actually deciding to charge or not, the agency of rank and file police officers is defined by the knowledge that is available. For instance, if the higher echelons of the police service are to implement certain security and safety policies and procedures, the knowledge of them will influence action based on the mandated information available. When considering the implementation of particular security and safety policies and procedures, such policies and procedures may curtail discretion as a lack of options for alternative action is provided. To exercise action, agents will draw on authoritative and allocative resources (McPhee 2004) that are disseminated through the network. The ability to govern rank and file police officer practice is mainly a matter of structural constraint by way of the possible course of action that is established by knowledge flow activities. Thus, discretion as the power to act is influenced by knowledge flow and self-reflexive monitoring (Giddens 1984).

Knowledge is transferred through the network to rank and file police officers and this creates the space for novel procedures to engender rank and file action. The structure of the network originally provides the means for action, but based on the need for additional service, the knowledge that flows creates additional approaches to handling public safety issues. The significance of knowledge flow is that rank and file police officers have agency when deciding how to act however, agency is finessed by the structural organization through knowledge flow. In other words, the governance of resource distribution and transfer influences the actions of rank and file police officers.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The traditional role of the public police has become ambiguous as a wide variety of nodes are involved in the delivery of policing services (Wright 2002). Through this research it is evident that rank and file police officers are part of a network organization that incorporates many nodes through processes of knowledge flow. Consistent with previous research (Borzel 1998; 2009; Brodeur and Dupont 2006; Burris et al. 2005; Castells, 1996; 2000; 2003; de Lint 2003; 2006; de Lint et al. 2007; Giddens 1984; 1991; 1995; Wood 2004; Wood and Dupont 2006; Wood et al. 2011) rank and file police officers are enabled and/or constrained by different nodes, forming more or less nodal networks of law enforcement and public safety initiatives, where the maintenance and reproduction of social order occurs through systems of knowledge flow. Rank and file police officers express agency by drawing on rules and resources, and in turn "reproduce the organizational structure as features of the social order" (McPhee 2004:130).

The current study provides a unique contribution to contemporary notions of policing that facilitates a nodal-network point of reference, where knowledge flow through network arrangements are demonstrated as the result of the information revolution (Castells 1996) and the creation of the knowledge society (Stehr 2007). It is almost as if every police officer has been "swept into the network organization of knowledge flow" (Sheptky 1998:59). In this sense, the central idea is that of a 'duality of structure' (Giddens 1984) where "structure and agency are both possible and restrictive while at the same time the medium and result of praxis" (Joas 1987:18). As a result, the structure of the police service and the agency of the police officer engender and maintain the network through knowledge flow activities.

Due to the limited number of research participants in the current study, future research that is interested in the organization, mobilization and control of policing resources should include a greater number of in-depth interviews to serve for analysis purposes. When considering rank and file police officers, the 'beat' or 'street cop,' by their very name, can only provide a mere glimpse of how knowledge sharing occurs through a network organization. Future research should include a description given by management or senior level police officers to account for different perspectives when considering knowledge flow and practice. Lastly, the location of study participants provides a culturally defined vantage point of working within South Western Ontario. Future research should consider expanding to cross-cultural comparisons of rank and file police officer practice as this may add to and provide further evidence of working through a network organization as knowledge worker. To overcome such limitations, a wider geographic sample is warranted.

APPENDIX

Interview Schedule Items

1). What is your current affiliation with the police service? How long have you been employed with the service?

2). What is it that you do when you first begin a shift at work (first arrive to work) for instance?

3). Who would you say you first come in contact with or become aware of when arriving to work? Are there instructions or tasks that you first get when you arrive at work?

4). What would you say is expected of you when called to a traffic accident for instance?

b). Is it possible to recount a set of instructions that you are to follow or use upon arrival?

c). Where do you get your instructions from? (Within or outside the police department)? Are there different types of people (institutions) involved with instruction allocation?

d). Are there any special instructions that you specifically follow at a traffic accident?

e). How do you carry out your work requirements? What 'tools' do you use at the traffic accident/site?

f). Who would you normally come in contact with at the traffic accident/site? Who are some of the people involved that inform or influence how you will conduct yourself?

g). In regard to these 'involved people,' what are some of the relationships that exist and how are they maintained? Are there differences between public and private "involved people?"

h). How do people/you make contact or stay connected to one another? What links exist?

5). How much of your daily work involves collecting, analyzing, and 'providing' information to other individuals, services?

b). Why is it that you collect information? What reason is it for? Are there any specific instructions for you to follow when collecting information?

c). Is information collected for one purpose/agent also provided to others?

d). Are certain items of information more important or valuable than others?

e). What do you do with information once you have collected it?

f). Are you aware of where the information you collected goes? That is, who else will have access to your collected information?

g). Are there instances in which you might hesitate to transfer information or have you questioned transferred information?

h). While on duty, who would you normally come in contact with during the course of your shift? That is, who do you usually collect or discuss information with?

i). How do 'information-demands' affect your everyday work?

j). Can you give an example of how information you have collected has helped solve a crime?

k). Can you give an example of how information you have collected has prevented a crime from occurring (information given to public)?

l). Can you give an example of how information you have collected has led to the development of new policing policies or procedures (even procedures for collecting/transferring information).

6). Would you describe the information collection relationship as a partnership (or something else)?

b) In a general sense, which or what types of individuals/groups would you say are partnered with police services or law enforcement work? What is the nature of this relationship with police services and law enforcement work and how do such individuals/groups come to be known by you during the course of your work?

c) Do you perceive yourself as spending more or less time involved with certain working relationships over others during the course of your daily work?

d). Within the information collection partnership, how do you perceive yourself as being part of this relationship? What would you say is the nature of this relationship?

e). How are links made between different agents and why? Is it for sharing solely information or for something else?

f). Do you feel that you always know or understand what is going on? Or do you sometimes feel that you are 'missing an understanding' of the situation?

g). Are you able to differentiate between partnership obligations when deciding how to act? May you enforce whichever rule you so choose, or are there some sort of instructions that you must follow when deciding how to act?

7). As far as you understand, are all policing arrangements similar within and across departments? Or are there different variations of partnerships and instruction directives?

8). Are there any perceived freedoms that you enjoy while working?

9). Is there anything else that you may want to add?

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