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Towards Victim-Oriented Police? Some reflections on the concept and purpose of policing and their implications for victim-oriented police reform

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Abstract

The global policy drift towards community policing and an enhanced philosophical and practical orientation towards victims of crime has been slow but incrementally successful in some jurisdictions. This paper uses a comparative approach to review the different conceptual and theoretical assumptions that underpin thinking about policing to tentatively identify the factors that support victim-oriented police reform. The paper draws on evidence from India and Argentina plus England and Wales to assess how different policing models have translated victim-oriented language into practice. It is notable that while police forces across the globe often share a common understanding of police functions there is less agreement when referring to how to engage with citizens and balancing the broader panoply of policing priorities. Conceptual understandings of policing often contain unarticulated assumptions about how policing should be done and this partly explains why placing citizenship and victims at the core in rhetorical terms does not always translate into practice. The paper concludes with a call for a concerted effort to articulate a clear philosophical and conceptual understanding of victim-oriented policing as an enabler of police reform.

Keywords: Victim-oriented, Police, Policing, Justice

Introduction

There has been an undoubted shift towards incorporating victims' voices and associated support mechanisms into policing strategies and tactics across international jurisdictions. Despite this, there has been surprisingly little scholarly discussion about what victim-oriented policing, or, more specifically '*police*', should look like. This absence of debate is due, firstly, to the misplaced assumption that the evolution of community policing is, in its essence, victim-oriented, and, secondly, due to the offender-oriented analysis that dominates policing studies. As a consequence of this, victim-oriented support tends to be bolted on to existing community policing services as a supplement to the prevailing police mandate of law enforcement (Wilson and Kelling, 1982), population governance (Foucault, 1991; Bajpai, 2013), crime prevention (Farrall, 2001) and low level social control (Cohen, 1985). The discourse of police chiefs and their political overseers thus captures the language of 'victims' but the translation of this discourse into practice is uneven and highly dependent upon the prevailing cultures of local police teams and partner agencies. The prioritisation of victim voices thus waxes and wanes with public, political and policing moods. The purpose of this paper is to review existing conceptualisations and assumptions about policing within a context that extends beyond individual nation states and to determine whether existing assumptions about policing are sufficient to drive and direct effective victim-oriented *police*.

This paper firstly assesses a range of existing conceptualisations of policing before reflecting upon the underpinning assumptions that emerge from this literature. The analytical framework draws upon social scientific, anthropological and philosophical literature to explore, as a priority, the meaning (or connotative conceptualisation) of policing. Herewith as a secondary issue, the paper then returns to the traditional administrative focus of policing studies upon legal structures, criminal procedure and the actualised empirical reality of street-level policing as experienced by police officers and citizens (the denotative conceptualisation). The paper explores attempts to develop victim-oriented policing across

three jurisdictions before concluding with a final discussion about the challenges and opportunities for victim-oriented policing. The examples of victim-oriented policing have been selected from countries that share similarities in democratic structure, experiences of crime and globalisation and experimentation with forms of policing that seek to enhance citizen engagement with policing and the role of victims within the criminal justice system. The examples serve as illustrations of what victim-oriented police reform could look like but, firstly, it is necessary to briefly review the conceptual literature on policing.

What is Policing?

The Anglo-American model of policing that developed throughout the nineteenth century continues to influence developments in professional policing across the globe. Despite this, the limitations of the common law model for the development of victim-oriented policing are rarely explored in any detail. Bajpai's (2013) victimological critique of common law criminal processes addresses this issue in brief but few western studies have explored the challenge of doing victim-oriented policing other than through critiques of community policing (for an overview see Skogan, 2008). Manning (2005; 2010) argues this is because western policing studies have developed in a largely atheoretical manner that rarely engages with the underlying philosophical assumptions that direct thinking about policing. This may explain the absence of victimological viewpoints. Most importantly, this paper argues that this absence of critical engagement with conceptualisations of policing has direct implications for policy development and police practice. This absence of conceptual thinking is particularly evident in policing policy transfer to post-colonial or post-conflict contexts where the arrival of western policing models, strategies and tactics that encourage citizen engagement and victim assistance struggle to flourish in the context of different policing structures, governance and culture (see, for example, Kapoor, 2013; Tankebe, 2013; Williams, 2014; Honke et al., 2016). This prioritisation of police function ahead of policing conceptualisation also provides challenges for police reform in the individual societies that are the focus of this

paper. These challenges are evident in the frustrated appeals for a review of the police role and function in England and Wales (Independent Police Commission, 2014; Orde, 2014), the persistent calls for reform of the Indian Police (Verma, 2005; Jauregui, 2009) and the establishment of the Buenos Aires Metropolitan Police in 2010 (Paterson and Clamp, 2013). This article draws together the similar challenges faced by these jurisdictions in policing their populations and connects their experiences to a conceptual framework that extends beyond an individual nation state.

Policing scholars recognise the importance of separating the institution and functions of the police from the looser concept of policing which reflects wider processes of social control. This conceptualisation has been stretched further to focus upon networks of 'security' (Bayley and Shearing, 1996; Johnston and Shearing, 2003; Shearing and Wood, 2003¹) and has led to debate about the extent to which the public police retain a privileged position in security provision (Loader and Mulcahy, 2003; Stenson, 2005). Yet, despite their value in understanding the governance of policing networks, these debates take policing scholarship towards political science realms in discussing structures, accountability and governance and do not resolve normative debates about who should police and how.

There is an undoubted need and demand within all societies for order and the imposition of rules (Durkheim, 1912; Fukuyama, 2012) but often little recognition of how processes of modernisation changed policing from being a victim-oriented service delivered through informal networks to an offender-oriented service serving the interests of the state (Emsley, 1991; Foucault, 1991; Bajpai, 2013). Prior to the rise of victims' movements across the globe, insufficient consideration was given to the extent to which these shifting philosophical assumptions drew justice away from the victim and any consideration of harm caused to individuals or the wider community (Kirchengast, 2006; Bajpai, 2013). The absence of the

¹ There is a large body of literature that analyses nodal network theory within the context of policing and security and I have only touched the surface of it here.

victim is evident in policing studies which, in historical terms, has situated critical discourse around either consensual administrative analysis of the police function or neo-Marxist conflict perspectives concerned with the purpose of state police. Manning concludes (2010) that it is the genesis of policing studies which limit the discipline to reporting on the concerns of practitioners, the public and politicians rather than being pre-disposed to criticality. Bajpai's (2013:11) comments from an Indian perspective broadly align with this predisposition to the concerns of criminal justice institutions ahead of victims.

We should therefore not be surprised that existing western conceptualisations of policing tend to place victims at the periphery of their concerns and this should encourage a more globalised interrogation of the meaning of policing. For example, post-colonial perspectives raise fundamental questions about the extent to which genuine democratic engagement and an orientation around victim's needs is possible with policing structures that emerged during a colonial context where their priority was the establishment of a specific political order. In a similar vein, Foucault's (1991) work on governmentality provides a framework for understanding policing as a state-oriented disciplinary technology and this has encouraged scholars to put forward an anthropology of the police as a potential driver of critical police studies across the globe (Karpiak, 2016). The following section picks up some of these theoretical ideas and analyses their utility within the context of victim-oriented policing.

Towards Victim Oriented Policing?

There is recognition that much progress has been made in engaging communities with policing across jurisdictions but there is a general consensus that the rights and needs of victims are yet to become a core element of day-to-day policing which remains offender-oriented and process driven (Packard, 2008; Bajpai, 2013; Manning, 2016). Community policing has become the model of choice for democratic police agencies seeking to enhance legitimacy and build public confidence although there remain significant critiques of the

extent to which this has been successful (Skogan, 2008). Community policing is not, in its essence, victim-oriented and the limitations of community policing endeavours arise because models of policing were not fundamentally reconfigured to deliver new aspirations (Paterson, 2011; Cox, 2012). As such, the historical purposes of policing prevailed with their focus upon social control, law enforcement, crime prevention and the protection of the interests of the state. Community policing was subsumed into these ways of thinking about policing rather than presenting a challenge to existing ways of thinking about policing. A model of policing that has citizens and victims at its core requires a much more radical reconfiguration than this. One potential mechanism is to find ways of addressing 'primary or secondary victimisation and reduce the effects of victimisation on the community' (Clark, 2005: 650). Where appropriate, this should include engaging communities in the reform process through radical forms of governance (Patten, 1999). Victim-oriented policing thus requires police organisations to think about how they conceptualise policing and then, in more practical terms, think about how they should address issues of structure, governance, partnership, roles, functions, training and education in line with this conceptualisation of policing.

So, how can this conceptualisation of policing be configured? According to Mouton and Marais (1988: 58) a concept should involve the 'most basic linguistic constructions by means of which people order and categorize reality'. A concept of policing is therefore our most basic tool for analysing, debating and making sense of our own understanding of policing. It is a symbolic construct which conveys meaning about the purpose of policing but is often represented as common-sense assumptions which are, in turn, often only specific to context. The basic dimensions of a concept include its connotation (the meaning of policing as it is conveyed to people) and its denotation (the phenomena which exist in reality when we refer to policing). The connotative dimension refers to theories, perspectives and interpretations of policing as highlighted in the opening section. The denotative dimension of concepts refers to things that can be empirically measured. This latter focus on what agencies do and how they do it has been the traditional focus of policing studies although this has stretched into more

connotative areas through cultural and anthropological studies as well as those focusing upon public confidence and police legitimacy. Most notably, although policing is undertaken by a range of formally and informally networked agencies and technologies, it is clear that citizens, in connotative conceptual terms, continue to connect policing with the police (Loader and Mulcahy, 2003; Clamp and Paterson, 2016). It is therefore notable that, despite the strengths of the nodal network critique, the police remain the main symbolic provider of policing in all of the examples presented in this article and, as such, an important analytical site through which to understand reform.

To illustrate this, Hills' (2014) refers to 'policeness' as the fundamental characteristics of police that transcend nation states. Hills (2014: 767) identifies three elements that the public use to identify 'policeness' - coercion, professionalism and discipline. Hills (2014: 767) concludes that these three elements produce a label for 'both specific organisations and the set of social relations the label's use produces and manages'. This framework provides a mechanism for understanding the connotative meaning of *police* in a context that extends beyond nation states. *Coercion* relates to the police use of actual or threatened force and intimidation (Hills, 2014: 768) and draws upon Bittner's (1970: 131) interpretation of police as an 'institution with the monopoly to employ non-negotiably coercive force'. Hills extends this definition to include 'the technical skills associated with a specialist coercive knowledge' (2014: 775) and thus other non-state modes of policing. *Professionalism* relates to the giving of recognition and authority to a body of people to police. Professionalism is often identified by the public in the form of a specific uniform although, in governmental terms, professionalism arises from training, status and accountability to civil society. Reflecting on Durkheim's (1912) work on order and change, professional 'policeness' relates to ownership of the knowledge, skills and power required to fulfil societal or political expectations about the management of low-level forms of disorder. Professionalism is thus often deemed to separate formal state police bodies from the myriad of other policing bodies that exist in societies. In some instances, this means that police organisations do not see it as part of their

role and function to engage with victims, particularly where law enforcement or other quasi-militaristic philosophies preside. Even where this is not the case, it can be difficult for the public police to engage those communities that are also often the target of coercive law enforcement. Because of this, many police organisations utilise non-uniformed personnel and non-coercive partners to engage with the public and victims of crime.

The final aspect of 'policeness' identified by Hills is *Discipline*. There is sometimes an assumption that the term 'police', as opposed to policing, refers to an organised and often hierarchical body of people. Underpinning this perspective is recognition that training, acculturation, hierarchy and accountability impose discipline upon police officials alongside the threat of punishment when disciplinary requirements are breached. This perception or interpretation of policing as an ordered and disciplined body is, where ordering is deemed to be effective, often linked to public trust in the organisation and, where those who govern the order are seen to be unreliable or corrupt, public mistrust. Available resources for the efficient administration of policing are key variables too. State-centred and rule-oriented models are devised in contexts where resources are plentiful yet these assumptions are challenged in states with plural modes of policing that are experiencing different developmental paths, periods of transition or neoliberal retrenchment. There are different opportunities for the development of victim-oriented policing that arise in these varied contexts.

The challenge of conceptualisation lies within the abstraction that occurs whenever we attempt to generalise to such a degree that the concept in question is unable to identify with the obvious and familiar traits found in any society (Schultz 1954: 266). Policing provides an excellent example of this with each nation state's police organisations being identified by its citizens in terms of its presentation (uniform, structure, societal presence) and its activities. Thus, connotative conceptualisations of policing are often marginalised as they need to incorporate ambiguous issues concerning how people make sense of a range of policing activities rather than how empirically effective initiatives are. This may explain the cyclical

nature of police reforms as ideas about what policing is, or should be, are recycled and repackaged in new forms with old shapes and hegemonic assumptions. As Clamp and Paterson (2016) have acknowledged elsewhere, there is a need to both broaden and lengthen the conceptual lens through which police and policing are understood in order to generate a victim-orientation that is not just bolted on to concerns with crime prevention, law enforcement and public protection.

Policing is, in Foucauldian (1991: 87-104) terms, a form of governmentality; a technique of governance and an expression of power relations. Policing is therefore given meaning within specific power structures whereby 'systems of thought and practice are governed by rules defining the conceptual possibilities determining the boundaries of thought in any given domain or period' (Foucault, 1972). Policing, in its connotative sense, is thus an ideological, political and cultural construction in that police and policing agencies respond, at least partly, to expectations set for them by political offices, civil and institutional bodies, media, policing cultures, active citizens and other prevailing influences in a society.

This insight is not new. Policing is both a function of society and a cultural phenomenon (Loader and Mulcahy, 2003; McLaughlin, 2007: 240). Policing is thus an expression of power that is given shape and form in each social context. This is evident in the offender-centric focus of common law criminal justice systems and processes that emphasise top-down interpretations of offences committed against the state rather than the individual or community. As such, when police reform takes place an emphasis is provided upon building structures to support victims within this offender-oriented system that continues to emphasise its priorities of law enforcement, crime prevention, public protection and social control.

Victim-Oriented Police Reform in England and Wales

The potential of victim-oriented policing strategies for increasing public confidence in the police has been well documented (Farrall, 2001; Clark, 2005; Bradford et al., 2009). Policy trajectories across criminal justice agencies continue to raise the significance of embedding victims' interests into the criminal justice process and this has led to the development of policies that emphasise the psychological and democratic benefits of situating victims at the heart of any police response (Ibarra and Erez, 2005; Taylor, 2012). It is therefore possible to re-configure the social relations through which police–community relations emerge, to increase public confidence in police action and to deliver more efficient and effective policing services (Paterson and Clamp, 2013). The potential implications for police legitimacy, effectiveness and efficiency are significant. Community policing philosophies and problem-oriented policing strategies have infused contemporary policing with a renewed victim focus. Despite this, they not achieved the paradigmatic change that their advocates hoped for due to challenges presented by, amongst other things, the offender-orientation of criminal justice processes, police organisational structures, culture and leadership.

A victim-oriented perspective should thus be an enabler for those who wish to implement community or problem-oriented models. Recognition that repeat victims generate disproportionate demands on police organisations makes this a mechanism for crime prevention and the generation of efficiencies in service delivery (Farrall, 2001; Stanko, 2008). Addressing repeat victimisation extends the crime prevention function using available intelligence and data to inform proactive policing strategies. Much of the initial repeat victimisation work in England and Wales from the 1990s focused upon property crimes, in particular burglary, where simple target-hardening prevention activities had a significant impact upon rates of repeat victimisation (Laycock, 2001). Police forces in England and Wales developed their own individualised responses to repeat victimisation with burglaries and this led to dramatic reductions in crime rates although often without a full understanding of which preventive measures had been most effective (Farrall, 2001). Crime rates in England and Wales continued to fall until 2015 but the police unexpectedly found that public

confidence in their activities fell at the same time as they were introducing these preventive strategies. This decline in confidence was partly due to an absence of focus upon how police did policing (i.e. how they engaged with citizens and victims) and their subsequent individual and organisational legitimacy in the eyes of the public (Bradford et al., 2009; Tyler, 2017). The challenge to police legitimacy also emerged because the focus upon repeat victimisation encouraged police organisations to focus upon crimes that were easy to solve rather than the complex social problems that had the most harmful impact upon peoples' lives (Eterno and Silverman, 2012).

In the later 1990s efforts to reduce repeat victimisation in England and Wales started to incorporate gender violence. In part, this was due to public concerns about violent crimes but, more significantly, it was due to the enhanced public profile given to the vulnerability of victims of gender violence by non-governmental organisations (Hanmer et al., 1989). The key driver here was recognition that domestically located violence in early life led to further violence and harm in later life and that this violence became increasingly severe, with one in three murders across England and Wales following on from previous abuse (Stanko, 2008). Similar insights from the US led to the introduction of mandatory arrest policies in many states whereas in England and Wales a range of different tools became available to police agencies to support and protect repeat victims. Collectively, these policy initiatives led to the development of databases that detail patterns of contact with the police (victimisation and offending) and which have the potential to be used by police organisations and partners from the statutory and NGO sectors to better understand the needs of vulnerable people and how to deploy resources in response to this.

As the earlier section noted, there are many other statutory, civil and informal bodies that perform policing functions and that contribute to order through a disparate range of social processes (Porter, 2016). It is these non-state bodies that drove initial change in policing in England and Wales from below and helped to facilitate a victim-orientation at the policy

level. It was also clear from evidence emerging out of Australia and England and Wales that while non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other statutory partners were key drivers of reform the public continued to expect the police to undertake a leadership role within new initiatives (Taylor, 2012; Clamp and Paterson, 2016). This continued demand for police leadership reflects Hill's comments about the labelling of 'policeness' as incorporating recognition of *professional* and *disciplinary* authority alongside the capability to perform coercive functions where necessary. Therefore, change is most likely to be enacted when it has the active support of police leaders and is driven through a partnership model that prioritises the protection of vulnerable people and is able to risk assess and triage appropriate responses (Stanko, 2008; Paterson and Clamp, 2012). This requirement was recognised by the UK government in the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act that provided statutory bodies with a mandatory requirement to address the problem of crime and was swiftly followed by the 2002 Police Reform Act which gave police powers to a range of other statutory providers.

Despite progress in responding to the needs of victims, policy developments in England and Wales face continued criticism related to their top-down and administrative response to victimisation (Walklate, 2011; Duggan and Heap, 2014). It has been argued that this approach has been undertaken to the detriment of community-based programmes that seek to empower victims via advocacy and support and address the underpinning causes of (often) male violence (Buzawa and Buzawa, 2003; Hester, 2013). Comparative analysis provides an opportunity to gain insight into alternative approaches to developing victim-oriented policy that is responsive to both the needs of individuals and the underlying social conditions that produce harm and victimisation. The following sections analyse case studies from Argentina and India to provide two different perspectives on the evolution of victim-oriented police reform.

Victim-Oriented Police Reform in Argentina

Because state-centred criminal justice systems have an embedded historical tendency to circumvent victims interests, innovations have often emerged outside of their structures and from within civil society. This is particularly evident in the above example of gender violence which involved awareness-raising from NGOs to conceptualise a victimological problem prior to top-down policy development. This short case study fails to capture the continued and continuing resistance to change faced by many victim-oriented police reforms and the perverse and unintended outcomes that have sometimes been produced. Tankebe's (2013) account of police reform in Ghana illustrates these challenges where attempts to implement community and victim-oriented reforms led to a rise in police violence and extra-judicial killings. Mani (2000:10) notes that police reform in countries experiencing conflict, or in post-conflict transition, remains closely linked to the military and identifies the vagueness of policing concepts as an inhibitor to successful reform. Similar experiences have been reported in other post-conflict (Hartz, 2000; Harrington, 2006; Harrington, 2008; Hills, 2009; Albrecht and Buur, 2010; Hoogenboom, 2010) and post-colonial (Cole, 1999; Kapoor, 2013; Tankebe, 2013) contexts.

Police work is underpinned by 'presumptive compliance' (Brodeur, 2010) that only functions once social order has been achieved whereas policing is a preternatural and eternal disciplinary process which adapts according to conflicts over ideology, resources, territory and the right to exercise power. Top-down police reform thus requires a sufficient degree of social order, police legitimacy and governmental support to be enacted otherwise reforms become subject to conceptual drift. Fundamentally, this means that any conceptual analysis of policing in a nation state must be attuned to local context and their associated hegemonic expressions of power in order to be implemented effectively.

For example, the Buenos Aires Metropolitan Police was established in 2010 due to concerns about the Argentine Federal Police's ability to address violent crime and low public confidence in policing resulting from years of military rule and corruption. Concerns about

citizen security, police ineffectiveness and public mistrust led to the development of a new communications infrastructure for the Buenos Aires police and the opportunity to embed a victim-oriented police response. In this example communications centre personnel monitor panic button calls from individuals who are considered to be at high risk of domestic or street violence. This victim-oriented policing program emerged out of these localized concerns about safety and security, in particular, startling rises in violence against women (Solano, 2012; Sibilla, 2012), and was driven by NGOs. As was the case in England and Wales, initial policy awareness was driven from below and created the space for innovation with technology and the development of a policing response that involved self-selecting at-risk users as co-producers of urban policy. Most importantly, in this initiative, the individual functions as the active decision-maker who initiates the police response and is not passively responding to the process-oriented goals of criminal justice professionals.

The innovative technological response simultaneously delivered resource savings for the police and addressed the threat of repeat victimization. This victim-oriented approach situates the police as the first responder to vulnerable people via pre-emptive alerts that are sent directly to a repeat victimization communication suite which locates the person at-risk, an appropriate response unit and a support worker. The victim-oriented approach utilises the technology as just one strand within a package of social and psychological support that emphasizes victim protection and facilitates the smarter use of scarce police resources.

Latin American developments in policing and surveillance have to be understood within the context of historically troubled police-citizen relations that, in Argentina, remain characterized by low levels of trust and enduring questions about resources, effectiveness and corruption (Eaton, 2008). In this instance, concerns about state security failure coupled with public concern about police corruption, civil liberties and privacy created the space for criminal justice innovation. The articulation of the panic button program objectives within women's NGOs located the importance of local social capital as a mechanism for developing

a victim-oriented approach that would continue to be owned by local state actors as well as criminal justice stakeholders. The absence of public trust in the discipline and professionalism of the Federal police led to the evolution of the panic button programme within a context where a new police organisation was able to establish a victim-oriented inter-agency and communications infrastructure that reflected the needs of the most vulnerable people in society. Policing programs that are driven by the needs and demands of communities, where the associated social problems lie, tend to demonstrate a better appreciation of relational space (Amin, 2004) and an understanding of where coercive measures are a proportionate and effective response. Henceforth, bottom-up policy development allows local communities and vulnerable people to impose their own configurations of crime and disorder upon policy development via alliances with more powerful institutions. In the example from Buenos Aires it was specific challenges to the legitimacy of policing that facilitated a re-conceptualisation of policing which retained the fundamental coercive and protective functions of the police organisations but allowed for a new definition of police professionalism to emerge that prioritised the voice and interests of vulnerable people.

Victim-Oriented Police Reform in India

The expansion and governance of digital surveillance technologies for the purposes of law enforcement, crime prevention and the regulation of movement and behaviour has been well documented (Johnston and Shearing, 2003; McClaughlin, 2007; Brodeur, 2010). Less attention has been given to the proliferation of victim-oriented approaches to policing which utilise twenty-first century information and communication technological infrastructures to address repeat victimisation (Paterson, 2015). In 2015 Delhi Police launched a similar tool to the Buenos Aires Police, the Himmat app, as part of their response to concerns about the safety of women travelling alone after the high profile rape of a young lady on a bus in 2012. Although use of the technology was not high, with around 31,000 registered users by 2017, the app provided a similar response to the Buenos Aires panic button with a shake of a smart

phone linking a vulnerable individual to a police communications centre and a nearby response vehicle with, where possible, the appropriate skillset to respond to this crime (Mason et al., 2015). A similar technology is also being used in Punjab, Stree Samman, where it has been downloaded 51,000 times since its introduction in 2015. These technological developments have emerged through similar policy processes to those in Buenos Aires with concerns about citizen security, mobilised through NGOs and community action groups, forcing innovation and change. While the Buenos Aires example emerged as a municipal response to the threat of victimisation, India received global attention with regards to high profile murder and sexual violence cases, not least the 2012 Delhi bus rape, and the public protests from women's groups that followed. These concerns about gender violence were exacerbated in some regions of the country where the police were not deemed to be providing a professional response to offences involving women and girls.

Yet, the rising profile of victims in India goes back much further than 2012, emerging during the 1990s through a combination of judicial, academic and NGO activism which led to a human rights inspired victims' movement. Recognition that traditional criminal justice processes and procedures excluded victims (Chockalingam, 1995; 2005; Bajpai, 2011) led to a range of legislative and policy innovations that slowly began to impact upon policing. Victim-oriented developments across India initially emerged out of community-based programmes due to a social policy vacuum and expanding yet uneven criminal justice responses (de Guzman and Kumar, 2010). Most notably, this includes the challenge of modernisation for rural systems that have traditionally relied upon village courts to administer justice but are faced with an increased influence from police and government (Vincentnathan and Vincentnathan, 2007). Despite this, there are significant challenges in translating changes in policy discourse into practice across a vast and diverse country with significant amounts of police violence (Verma, 2005). This challenge is evident in Jauregui's (2013:126) anthropology of Uttar Pradesh Police which in addition to physical coercion identified a culture of 'neglect, abuse, excuse and retreat into hyper-proceduralism' amongst the police

alongside public demand for police violence. The challenge of delivering equity and a victim-orientation in contexts where state and federal police have to compete with other informal modes of policing remain and are best understood through localised anthropological accounts rather than administrative narratives. It is the more in depth anthropological or ethnographic accounts that are able to unpick the meaning of policing as it is understood in households, communities and police stations.

Many states experiencing rapid social and economic development have a similar pluralised form of policing based on non-state actors providing a community-centric policing function in the absence of, or as a supplement to, an established centralised policing capability (Grabosky, 2009; Hills, 2014). Tribal societies in pre-Roman Europe, Asia, Africa, and on the Arabian Peninsula had collective and, often, consensual justice administered by combinations of individuals from the tribe or community and generally agreed to by those members of the community or tribe. Thus, modes of communal policing continue to exist alongside other modern modes of policing. Cole (1999) and Marenin (2009: 353), considering African states, identify and describe a vast informal social ordering system that does what the state police are unable to do. Schmeidel and Karokhail (2009: 320) describe the arabaki as a community based customary policing structure that focuses on the tribal issues of the Pashtun in Afghanistan. In Benin, Bierschenk and de Sardan (2003: 158) describe the local forms of dispute resolution in the rural tribal communities and identify the diverse forms of legitimacy that exist across communities. Similarly, Braithwaite and Gohar (2014) consider legal plurality in tribal areas of Pakistan and identify multiple policing structures with a similar genesis and status to the developing state systems. In all these jurisdictions there remains a tension between informal and formal modes of policing that impact upon responses to victims.

Further policy innovations that have been driven from the top-down in India include the development of all women police stations for female victims and mandatory crime recording

policies. Yet, as this article has demonstrated across jurisdictions, the focus upon addressing repeat victimisation remains in tension with traditional police concerns with law enforcement, crime prevention and low level social control and, as such, should be considered as policy innovations rather than as a fundamental re-conceptualisation of the police role. National level policing policy shifts have tended to situate female police officers as the solution to the problem of gender violence through discourse that demonstrates unqualified assumptions about unity amongst women. This perspective reiterates Hill's position about the solution to problems requiring some element of 'policeness' to give authority to the response although this perspective is challenged by critics who argue that gender identity and power relations affect relationships between women as much as they do across genders.

Summary

All of the examples from the three jurisdictions are linked by rising victim voices and public demand for security although there are distinct differences between how policy manifests itself in England and Wales, Argentina and India. The illustrations of victim-oriented police reform presented in this article have been influenced by the same global drivers of victims' voices in civil society, concerns with the role of victims in the criminal justice process, demands for police reform and cognizance of victims' rights. Yet, despite this global policy drift, there remains little articulation of what victim-oriented policing should look like. Victim-oriented policing thus emerges out of the complex biopolitics of each set of circumstances and, in particular, the day-to-day actions of victim-oriented police. This article has drawn together a small body of literature to start the conversation about what victim-oriented police and policing might look like and to identify factors for consideration when undertaking such work. Other areas of criminal justice have engaged with a victim-oriented discourse much more explicitly so there is lots to be learnt by the police studies community and questions to be raised about the extent to which a coercive institution can orient itself around the interests of victims.

None of the victim-oriented policy innovations fundamentally re-configure the relationship between victims and the formal criminal justice process but they represent attempts to build a greater victim-orientation into existing systems. Importantly, these policing responses have been conceptualised outside of police organisations although there has always remained a significant professional police role with service delivery and co-ordination. Collectively, these examples demonstrate that change is possible but also that victim-oriented reform is a lengthy and often partially complete process due to public and police identification with the fundamental characteristics of what it means to be police.

There continues to be a challenge to building citizen engagement and a victim-orientation in models of policing that have historically and culturally prioritised reactive response and law enforcement through coercive and disciplinary techniques. The most often encountered phrase in western descriptions of policing remains the Weberian view that the police exercise authority over the public and are the manifestation of the state's legitimate use of force or coercion (Bittner, 1970: 36-47). Policing is therefore understood as being fundamentally coercive, disciplinary and delivered by those who own authority and power. Yet, as the earlier part of this article noted, conceptualisations of policing belong to specific times and places and should not solely be defined by the actions and activities of personnel. Thus, the police use of force paradigm is too narrow, descriptive and state-centred to provide a satisfactory basis for conceptualising the nature of either historic or contemporary modes of policing, particularly in contexts where multiple modes of policing exist².

This paper has argued that the ascendancy of criminal justice and legal responses to victimisation resulted in a process-oriented focus on offenders ahead of victims and has often left other more structural and socially conditioned determinants of victimisation and harm

² Bittner acknowledged this limitation in his conversations with Brodeur about conceptualisations of policing (2010: 103-)

unaddressed. The focus on formal, top-down policy therefore needs to be complimented with more sustainable community-based interventions that challenge existing structural impediments to change. Experiences of both rapid social and economic development and neoliberal retrenchment challenge the assumption that societies need or experience evolutionary change in institutions such as policing. It is change that offers opportunities to rethink how societies police. Any re-conceptualisation of policing thus requires an appreciation of legal, political, ideological and socio-cultural contexts to capture both connotative and denotative elements (Williams, 2014). Any predisposition to function without concept will have a profound impact on the readiness for change.

A reconsideration of the prevailing policing imagination in any jurisdiction can help situate justice as the core driver of victim-oriented policing. As the first section noted, both Bajpai (2013: 3-4) and Manning (2010), drawing on different legal and philosophical perspectives, emphasise the centrality of justice as an underpinning framework for the development of a victim-oriented and democratic police organisation. Paterson and Clamp (2016) takes this further and argue for a more restorative approach to policing which identifies harms and facilitates coercive and non-coercive responses to this harm. In each instance, such an approach recognises rights, emphasises citizen participation and offers assistance and support but recognises the essential role of some kind of *police* throughout the process. A failure to identify and agree on an underpinning philosophical conceptualisation of policing as distinct from the state-oriented functions of the police undermines attempts to reform policing. If police organisations want to situate the protection and support of victims as one of their primary functions then a fundamental review of the role and function of police organisations, within the context of an agreed conceptualisation, is required to deliver change.

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