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ABSTRACT

American police grew in per capita strength from the mid-nineteenth century until the first decade of the twentieth when they reached their present strength. Their hierarchical organization, communication capacity, and uniformed visibility made them civil servants of general resort, called on to run soup kitchens, inspect boilers, standardize weights and measures, and recover lost children. Not until the end of the nineteenth century did they begin to focus more narrowly on crime control; in so doing they diminished their varied range of social services, which included the overnight housing of thousands of homeless people. The broad range of police activities and their complex relationship to cities in their formative era has made them the subject of increasing historical research.

Historians working in the field of American crime and justice have produced a massive body of scholarship, a recent, selected collection of articles alone consuming over 7,000 pages in sixteen bound volumes (Monkkonen 1990). A significant portion of this work deals with the police as opposed to a more holistic view of the criminal justice system or, alternatively, of the whole city government. The police have attracted the historian's attention for many reasons, ranging from simple curiosity to questions about urbanization, crime control, and the history of society. Although no one concept or paradigm has guided this

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research, the result has been a rich and valuable set of empirical studies.

A decade ago Roger Lane (1980) published in *Crime and Justice* a synthetic article on urban policing that newer work expands in several different directions. This essay follows the directions of the new research, emphasizing areas where substantive gains have been made. The intention here is to examine the areas where there is new knowledge rather than to write a completely new history of policing. That task grows ever more complex, especially for the years after World War I. Historians have, for the most part, concentrated on the earlier years for several reasons. First, the history of the nineteenth-century United States has captured intense research excitement in many fields, and the police have given historians an avenue of investigation with a unique perspective (Monkkonen 1982). Second, in most characterizations of periods in U.S. history, the Progressive Era, closed by World War I, culminates in many of the principles and issues that undergird the major intellectual, social, and political developments of the remainder of the twentieth century. Finally, modern social science has much better documented the post-World War II era, so that the challenge of historical recovery and analysis has not been as great for more recent historical events.

The new studies have deepened our understanding of the origins of the police, their functional roles, their relationship to criminal behavior and public order, police organizations as employers and controllers of labor, the police professionalization movement, the complex and unique situating of police in the larger political order, and the growth and change of nonurban police—private and federal, in particular. In addition, we now have a fuller picture of police as they became regular components of the urban service sector and essential participants in the criminal justice system.

Sections I and II of this essay summarize my book on the police (Monkkonen 1981a), supplementing its research and analysis with other new and relevant work. Section I stresses the social and political innovation represented in policing, while Section II emphasizes that the fundamental aspect of U.S. policing as a component of local government has made police a part of urban services. The essay then turns in Section III to new research publications focusing on police as employers. Section IV examines police relations with organized labor. Section V turns to those issues in police reform that have attracted historical research, while Section VI focuses on policy issues in the

context of a federal political system. The conclusion delineates future research needs and directions.

I. Police as an Innovation

Police are relative newcomers to the Anglo-American criminal justice system. The Constitution does not mention them. Early city charters do not mention them, either, for the simple reason that, as we know them, police had not been invented. Instead, cities had loosely organized night watches and constables who worked for the courts, supplemented by the private prosecution of offenders through lower-level courts (Steinberg 1989). The night watch and day constable, dating from the Middle Ages, were familiar comic figures in Shakespeare's plays and were not replaced until the 1820s, when London police were reorganized by Robert Peel. The police precedent for the United States, as is well known, came from the establishment of the Metropolitan Police of London in 1829. Peel used his military experience in Ireland to create a social control organization midway between a military and a civil force (Palmer 1988). The new police solved both tactical and political problems: they were cheaper than a military force; they created less resentment; and they were more responsive to civil authorities (Miller 1976).

Constables were responsible to civil and criminal courts. They supported themselves by fees, which came from serving warrants and civil papers and arresting offenders. The victim of an offense had to seek a constable, paying for his actions. Ferdinand's (1980) study of Boston showed that a few constables often took the initiative in making drunk arrests, apparently to make a continuous income. The fees for catching an offender or for restitution could often be higher than the value of a stolen object, but Steinberg's new work (1989) suggests that these fees were no deterrent to many poor people using the criminal justice system. His work also shows that the constables could be sidestepped, victims going directly to local aldermen's courts.

Night watch did just that: they were to raise the hue and cry in case of an offense or to sound an alarm for a fire. The usual criticism of them was that they slept, used their noisy rattles to warn off potential offenders, and ran from real danger. The *New York Gazette* asserted that the watch were a "Parcel of idle, drunken, vigilant Snorers, who never quelled any nocturnal Tumult in their lives; but would, perhaps, be as ready to join in a Burglary as any Thief in Christendom" (quoted in Peterson and Edwards [1967], p. 324). These criticisms are difficult

to evaluate, but they do suggest that the night watch, who were either citizens doing required volunteer service or, more likely, their paid substitutes, were not in any way a serious crime-fighting organization.

There are four important innovative features of the new police as created in the United States in the nineteenth century. First, the new police had a hierarchical organization, with a command and communications structure resembling the military. This gave them an ordered and centralized hierarchy with an immediate communication superiority to all other urban organizations as well as the preceding constable watch system. Even without an electronic communications system (call boxes or police telegraphs first, then the telephone, which came a little later in the nineteenth century), the simple chain of command meant that a citizen could report an offense to an officer who would in turn relay the information to headquarters, which could then distribute the information back down the line. While no doubt the system operated with less than perfect precision, in the traditional constable watch system, this was even less likely to happen. Haller's (1970, 1976) work on Chicago shows that, after 1930, centralization increased further, especially with the introduction of radio cars and the decreased importance of the local station house. Since under the prepolice constable watch system the constables had gained their incomes from fees, the structural incentive encouraged them to follow up promising (i.e., high-fee-generating) leads themselves.

Second, increasing functional differentiation in revised city governments located the police under the executive rather than the judicial branch—previously, constables and watches had been part of the lower courts.¹ As a part of the mayor's executive office, the police were no longer general factotums for courts, which freed them from civil court activities. This shift had to accompany the abandonment of fees for service, for civil fees had been a part of the constabulary incomes (Steinberg 1989). This shift also sent the American police down a different developmental path from the English police, who long remained much more active and involved in preparing and prosecuting criminal cases than did their American counterparts. Until very recently, most English prosecutions were carried out by police officers and police solicitors. The shift also ensured a structural antagonism between the courts, prosecuting attorneys, and the police as the divide

¹ It is necessary to caution that this distinction overdraws the notion of executive, legislative, and judicial branches, for aldermen held courts (Surrency 1974).

in responsibilities took on greater ideological content in the twentieth century. This antagonism, usually characterized as an aspect of adversarial justice, was not at all intended and distinguishes the United States from other nations.

Third, the uniforms made the police visible, hence accessible, to all, whether neighbors or strangers, and this essentially made them the first and, for a long time, the only officials easily seen by the public. Uniforming, an integral part of their new organizational model, generated consternation and some amusing anecdotes for police historians. At first the uniforms were mocked by commentators and shunned by police officers. Called "popinjays" in Boston, ridiculed as "expensive and fantastical" in New York, derided as "livery" in Chicago, and refused by an officer in Philadelphia as "derogatory to my feelings as an American," uniforms were a difficult part of the transformation (Lane 1967, p. 105; Richardson 1970, p. 65; Johnson 1976, pp. 172–76, respectively). Americans valued greatly their freedom to wear what they pleased. Previously, only soldiers and servants of the wealthy had been seen on the streets in such outfits. But the uniforms instantly increased citizen access to patrol officers, now visible for the first time. This visibility, for instance, combined with a centralized communication system, accounted for the sudden turn to the police by parents of lost children; prior to police availability, parents had had to conduct frantic, random community searches (Monkkonen 1981a, pp. 109–28). In addition, uniformed officers were easier for their superiors to find and control.

Fourth, the police were conceived to be active: that entailed patrol (they were expected to discover and prevent crime), regular salaries and lines in the city budget, and free prosecution of criminal offenders. Conceptualized as bringing regular and more effective crime prevention to the city, this new activity contrasted with the constables' responsive, fee-based work. City officials hoped that regular patrol would prevent crime by scaring would-be offenders. If successful, of course, then fees for catching offenders would no longer be a fair way of paying for police services. So the new police had to have regular salaries that were to be a part of the city budget. An unexpected consequence of this was free prosecution of offenders: no longer did a victim have to calculate the value of a stolen pair of boots before calling a constable. Steinberg's research (1989) in the Philadelphia aldermanic court records suggests that people may have been quite willing to pay a fee to prosecute neighbors. He argues that one reason for creating the

Philadelphia police was to stop frivolous private prosecutions.² The regularity of the salaries made the police jobs more attractive, hence their almost immediate seizure as political plums to be handed out by the political party gaining the mayor's position. From this then developed the use of police in political control, police officers sometimes deterring voters and generally working for a partisan control of the ballot boxes (Jordan 1980). And this development, in turn, meant that as immigrant voting machines grew, immigrants had access to these city jobs early on. The image of the Irish cop had a genuine basis in reality, even in cities like New Orleans.

Steinberg's (1989) important work on Philadelphia shows that, prior to the police, a vigorous system of private prosecution had kept the aldermen and mayor busy adjudicating minor criminal offenses. He argues that this system, though corrupt, kept the citizenry in easy and constant contact with the law and that the police for their first two decades mainly pursued arrests for public-order offenses, the petty larcenies and assaults being handled by these lower and more neighborhood-based courts. Steinberg's book adds an additional dimension to what local criminal justice systems looked like prior to the police, revising the work on the constable watch by Ferdinand (1980), who emphasized their inefficiency and unsystematic entrepreneurialism. Steinberg raises new sets of complex questions for further analysis in the history of crime control and policing in his argument that the police deliberately, albeit slowly, eroded the vigorous involvement of the urban poor and laboring classes in the justice system. That is, regular patrol by salaried officers in theory reduced corruption, increased the availability of the police for consistent service, and removed the opportunity for frivolous complaints and prosecution by those with the money to pay fees. Did the modern police in fact decrease crime control and make the justice system less easily accessible?

Steinberg's work depends in part on a scholarly find, the fragmentary logs of three aldermen. Few of the numerous aldermen apparently kept written records, which means that a more systematic comparison than he attempted will depend on historians discovering new records. Nevertheless, until Steinberg's book, no historian even had the idea of looking for such materials, and his work opens an exciting new set of questions. In addition to such logs, police historians have already

² To be sure, the reporting of offenses had liabilities because witnesses were on occasion still locked up.

uncovered a rich lode of systematic sources (Monkkonen 1979, 1980). These include detailed annual reports, internal records, less regularly preserved blotters (the daily log of station activities), and, for the nineteenth century, detailed newspaper accounts. Most police departments have written histories that vary widely in quality and coverage (see Monkkonen [1981*a*], pp. 164–68, for a bibliography). In addition to these specifically police-oriented sources, there are records produced by courts, coroners, and carceral institutions. Most of these are manuscripts, but state governments produced annual summaries of court, prison, and jail activities. In addition, the federal censuses have interesting data, rendered difficult to use by their inconsistency from decade to decade.

II. Policing as an Urban Service

The new kinds of police work came as costly service innovations to American cities, stingy city governments often resisting the transition specifically because of the new claims on city budgets (Schneider 1980). Uniformed police spread across the United States to most cities in the three decades between 1850 and 1880. It sometimes seemed that local incidents, most typically riots, “caused” a city to change its police force to the modern form. But in general, a city’s rank size among American cities determined the order in which police were adopted, the spread of police innovation following a diffusion curve typical for all sorts of innovations (Monkkonen 1981*a*, pp. 49–64). Some historians (Blackburn 1979; Rippey 1985) have argued that police were created in response to rising crime, but there is little empirical evidence to support this because most social scientists now assume that the long-run trends in crime rates have been downward (Gurr 1989). More to the point, those creating police forces would have had little way of detecting rising crime. Riots had long been a part of American urban life, and historians have been able to describe in considerable detail the political ends of riots as conscious social forms (Schneider 1980; Gilje 1987). New York City, for instance, had major nineteenth-century riots in 1806, 1826, 1834, 1837, 1849, 1855, 1857, 1863, 1870, 1874, 1900 (Monkkonen 1981*a*, p. 196). At best, one could say that the creation of the police force reflected a growing intolerance for riots and disorder, rather than a response to an increase in crime. Gallman (1988) has shown that this was the case for Philadelphia, a city with a long tradition of rioting, where he argues that citizens no longer accepted public outbursts.

The police grew in per capita strength from around 1.3 per thousand in the 1860s, stabilizing at two per thousand in 1908, which is around the current ratio. Examined more carefully, the growth data suggest two eras of expansion, the first up to about 1890, when the police forces became permanent fixtures of city government, and the second in the decade of the 1890s when the police force again and finally expanded in strength. As a reciprocal to the increasing number of police per capita, the proportion of patrol officers fell from around 95 to about 75 percent by 1920. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the actual number of patrol hours per officer may also have declined, for not only did the proportion of patrol officers decrease, but the two-shift system (twelve hours on, twelve hours off) yielded to the more humane three-shift system in this era (Monkkonen 1981a, pp. 144–45). Certainly, the twentieth century saw declining patrol hours per officer. Watts (1981a), using more precise data for the St. Louis police department, has estimated police hours available for patrol since 1900, accounting for vacation and workweek changes. He concludes that, since the nineteenth century, hours per officer on the street have consistently declined, as one might expect given the general decrease in the length of the working day. Using officer hours worked for the period 1958–62 as a base, police worked about 80 percent more at the end of the nineteenth century, about 20 percent more between 1907 and World War II, about 10 percent less after 1962 (Watts 1981a, p. 671, n. 15). At least for time allotted to patrol, police presence began declining within four decades after their introduction to cities.

Once in place, city police almost immediately began doing things unexpected by their original creators, whose expectations were more along the lines of crime prevention. Along with arresting offenders, the police took in tramps, returned lost children by the thousands, shot stray dogs, enforced sanitation laws, inspected boilers, took annual censuses, and performed myriad other small tasks. Their unique communications organization and street presence virtually forced them to become city servants as well as crime-control officers. Simultaneously, with a pull toward urban service came a surprising inability to fulfill other crime-related functions, most notably riot control and catching of offenders whose crimes crossed many local government districts (e.g., thieves on railroads). Unpredictable in their ability to control strikes, police sometimes sided with strikers (e.g., as happened in Homestead, Pennsylvania, in 1892). Fogelson (1989) shows that urban elites created armories in response to strikes and riots beginning in the

post-Civil War era, signaling their clear recognition that police skills did not include antiriot mobilization. As the contributor to the *Cyclopedia of American Government* stated: "Labor riots, particularly against strike breakers, sometimes [had] the sympathy of the police" (McLaughlin and Hart 1914, 3:584).

From very early on police did something for which they had not been created: they dispensed forms of welfare in response to the pressing demands of citizens. It is important to be clear about this particular transformation: in the mid-nineteenth century, all welfare was a local responsibility. The federal government took no such responsibility until the early twentieth century. State governments accepted limited responsibility for the blind and mentally ill and juveniles in need of reform (Schlossman 1977; Brenzel 1983; Dwyer 1987). County governments accepted responsibility for paupers, a group confined to the severely disabled, the old and infirm, and pregnant destitute women (Hannon 1984a, 1984b; Katz 1986). City governments took on all others, from orphans to the homeless. Police departments were the front line of encounter for a good many of such needy people. Station houses contained separate dorm-type rooms to house overnight "lodgers." Each city varied in what it provided, but the accommodations were primitive and limited to a few nights. A police officer recorded each person's name and sometimes rather detailed information (age, place of birth, occupation, "whither from," and destination). Such police service did not go unnoticed, either by the poor or by city officials.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century and into the 1920s, many reformers worked to dismantle station house lodging. Jacob Riis, in his autobiography, complained bitterly about his and his dog's maltreatment by the police when he stayed in stations in New York City and Camden, New Jersey, after his arrival in the United States in the 1870s (Monkkonen 1981a, p.92). Later his bitterness fused with the critiques of police commissioners like Theodore Roosevelt, who argued that the presence of tramps was degrading and threatened police officers with contagious diseases.³ At the same time, other reformers in major eastern cities worried about the consequences of the indiscriminate giving of overnight lodging. They argued that this accommodation did nothing to reform the bad habits of the poor; scientific charity

³ Berman (1987), in telling the story of Roosevelt's career as New York City police commissioner, captures nicely this transition and its linkage to the larger program of the progressive movement, rationalization, efficiency, and an end to corruption.

should not be indiscriminate. Instead, some reformers encouraged cities to substitute municipal lodging houses for police lodging, requiring delousing and work from the overnight lodgers. Such reforms carried through at least in Boston and New York, much to the unhappiness of the lodgers who preferred dirty but no-strings-attached shelter. By the 1920s, police were out of the lodging business; only rarely have social welfare histories shown an awareness of this important role taken on by the police (Katz 1986).

It seems almost natural to ask today why this simple police activity should have been allowed to disappear, especially since there is no evidence suggesting that the police themselves complained. But in the context of the original crime control impetus behind their creation, and the changing focus of their range of activities, the disappearance of lodging makes more sense. Social welfare reformers, and some police chiefs, began to differentiate the components of the "dangerous class," and tramps became, to them, the unemployed rather than dangerous. After the 1890s, police really did focus more and more on crime control. So did the other loose components of the criminal justice system. For example, Friedman and Percival, in their study of Alameda County, California, show that in this period "criminal justice shifted away from amateurs and part-timers toward full-time crime handlers" (1981, p. 194).

Other tests confirm the change in police focus from both broad welfare and crime control to more concentration on crime control. For instance, the correlation in most major cities between arrests for criminal offenses (as opposed to public-order offenses) and numbers of police per capita increased after 1890. A recent analysis of arrests for murder and other felonies, lodgers, and police strength in the twenty largest American cities more precisely confirms 1894 as the turning point, the moment when police began to respond more directly to crimes of violence as measured by murder arrests (Bijleveld and Monkkonen 1991). At the same time, police focused their attention on other felony crimes, while continuing to slough off their burden of temporarily housing the homeless and even reducing the numbers of people arrested for public-order misdemeanors.

The narrowing focus of police on crime in turn came with a new set of external pressures, including demands for efficiency, honesty, and crime control. Coordination of departments began at the modest scale of sharing information. The Police Chiefs Union, founded in 1893 (to become the International Association of Chiefs of Police), started a modest bureau of identification at some point in the 1890s.

Their efforts did not meet with success because of the nature of the federal system. Voluntary contributions from city police departments could not provide adequate or consistent funding for this national activity. Not until Theodore Roosevelt became president were police leaders to see the creation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), some twenty years later (Dilworth 1977; Uchida 1983). A range of local changes paralleled these fledgling national coordinating efforts.

In this context, the question of the police role in maintaining public order gains new significance. Compared to their British predecessors, Miller (1976) argued, the new police in the United States envisioned their role as keepers of public order, dispensing summary justice immediately on the street (see also Friedman and Percival 1981, pp. 80–81). Police jobs had high rates of turnover, in part because of their nature as political plums in cities with rapid regime transitions and in part because high residential mobility characterized all of urban America. Turnover ensured that police professionalization issues never mattered for the nineteenth-century officer. And for the whole police organization, the keeping of lodgers had no logical role conflict with arresting drunks and felons: all of these activities involved control of what was then called the “dangerous class.” The cessation of control of the “dangerous class” came with the first reforms of police corruption in the 1890s, followed by new emphases on investigative techniques like fingerprinting (around 1905) and with the slow change of the job from political plum to career occupation. By the end of World War I, police were in the business of crime control. Other city- or state-run agencies had taken over their former noncrime control activities.

It should be noted here that the dating of the turn to crime control is based on police behavior. Additional evidence suggests that, over the decades of the early twentieth century, the crime-control model became more explicitly drawn. Douthit (1975), for instance, presents evidence that, in the 1920s and 1930s, an effort to create a professional police brought with it an even more refined focus on crime control that excluded all other forms of social conflict. In the mid-1920s the concept of a “war against crime” was popularized by businessman Mark Prentiss (who wrote in the popular magazine *Current Opinion*) at the same time that somewhat more serious work was being conducted by crime commissions or crime surveys in twenty-four states (Douthit 1975, pp. 318–19). President Coolidge’s National Crime Commission (1925) brought national attention to the movement, and President Hoover created a better-known National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, usually referred to as the Wickersham Commission,

that published fourteen reports and had research conducted by such experts as August Vollmer, Zechariah Chafee, Jr., Newton Baker, Edith Abbott, Mary Van Kleeck, Sam B. Warner, Miriam Van Waters, Clifford Shaw, and Henry McKay (Walker 1981, pp. 173–75). These national commissions and the high publicity earned by J. Edgar Hoover marked an image-setting finale to the much longer swing of the police mission to crime control.

Not all scholars agree that the 1890s mark the transition to a crime-control model for the police. In a debate over policing practice and public-order arrests, Watts has argued that crime-control-oriented policing was not finalized until the 1940s, an argument based on internal documents as well as quantitative evidence from the St. Louis police. In contrast, Wertsch, in a close documentary analysis of the Des Moines police department, argues for a change in the 1920s: a “methodological change in policing that drew its attention away from public disorder offenses toward the more urgent task of protecting lives and property” (1987, p. 448). Therefore, while there is agreement that a shift from public-order control to crime control did occur, the precise timing remains in dispute (see also Watts 1981a, p. 658). Several factors probably affected this transition and its city-to-city variability, just as several factors affected the initial adoption of uniformed police. More precise examination may well establish a parallel: an early but longer-lasting transition, say from 1890 to 1920, in those large cities with both progressive reform movements on many fronts and with innovative police departments, with a later but quicker transition in smaller cities.

A declining per capita rate of arrests for drunk offenses may also have resulted solely from this shift in emphasis, although there is strong, if contested, evidence suggesting that drinking itself has been in a long decline since the mid-nineteenth century (Rorabaugh 1979; Monkkonen 1981c, 1983; Watts 1983a; Wertsch 1987; Blocker 1989). The complexity of the topic and the question of policy is most dramatically illustrated by the articulated policy change in the Cleveland police in 1908. Under Chief Fred Kohler, the police adopted the “golden rule” in 1908, assisting drunks home or ignoring them. As the seventh largest American city, Cleveland was often looked to as a model for reform.⁴ Arrests for drunk offenses plummeted from 18,743 in 1906 to a low of 909 in 1912, the most visible impact being between 1907 and

⁴ Note that, although Cleveland's arrest trends are not typical of most cities, it is included here for its observed policy shift and to exemplify how Progressive Era reforms moved the police toward the goal of crime control.

1908 when the arrests fell by 80 percent. Patrol officers each arrested an average of about 37 drunks per year in 1906 and less than two per year in 1912. But this dramatic policy change simply followed on a more complex trend in Cleveland where arrest rates for drunkenness had fallen from as early as 1873 until the mid-1890s, and the peak in 1906 was the result of a decade of increased aggressiveness in arrests for drunkenness. Kohler's policy could actually be interpreted as a return to an earlier pattern. Thus a probable scenario that links policy to public behavior is that more decorous behavior had begun to prevail on the city streets as the long nineteenth-century campaign against excessive drinking slowly spread its influence. In the larger context of growing urban order and political progressivism, the police themselves shifted toward a crime-control orientation and simultaneously reconsidered the effectiveness of arresting drunks.

Whether or not public behavior became less disorderly, it is very clear that the policing of drunkenness had been in a long downswing prior to the movement in the 1970s to decriminalize public drunkenness. And when the question of drunkenness is considered in the context of public order, more broadly defined, the notion of a shift in police action from order maintenance to crime control remains a major argument from the past decade's research. It should still be considered as a hypothesis worth more systematic exploration. At least one pair of scholars is doing this. A project by Weinberger and Reinke (1989) compares two industrial locations, Manchester, England, and Wuppertal, Germany, for the period 1890–1930. Based on the American work and on work for England that argues that urban policing had aggressively reduced criminal offenses until the 1890s (Gatrell 1980), they seek to expand further and make more precise the relationship between police and public order and issues of social welfare. They have already found important differences from the American experience and evidence that suggests that the shift away from welfare concerns may not have occurred until after World War I. In Britain a police orientation toward class control was “self-evident” (Weinberger and Reinke 1989, pt. 1, p. 14). In Germany, the police explicitly focused on controlling worker politics and unions, and at the same time separate health and sanitary police were created to implement growing expertise in these fields (Weinberger and Reinke 1989, pt. 2, pp. 8–9).

III. Police Departments as Employers

In the United States, through their organizational tie to the mayor's office and to local partisan politics, police departments have been im-

portant as employers of some immigrant groups, most notably the Irish. This held true even for southern cities; in 1850, over one-third of the New Orleans' police force had been born in Ireland (as opposed to the Irish population, which was about one-fourth of the city population) (Rousey 1983, p. 62). Rousey quotes northern visitor Frederick Law Olmstead's encounter with a police officer in New Orleans in 1854: when he asked for directions, "a policeman, with the richest Irish brogue, directed me back to the St. Charles" (p. 61). Nativist politicians purged the police of most of their immigrant officers in the late 1850s, but by 1870 the Irish were back in the department. Summarizing the experience of seventeen southern cities, Rousey discovered that Vicksburg and Memphis both had fifty percent of their officers born in Ireland as late as 1880 (if children of immigrants were included, this proportion would probably have been much higher). He concludes that "a large Irish role in southern urban policing was the rule" for most of the nineteenth century (p. 80).

Several recent studies by Watts (1981*b*, 1982) analyze police hiring practices in St. Louis in great detail using personnel data that include persons not hired. The results of his work provide a unique source of information on twentieth-century police departments. Between 1917 and 1969, one-third of St. Louis's recruits had had a previous local arrest record (Watts 1981*b*, p. 82). The median age of recruits, around thirty at the beginning of the twentieth century, dropped slowly as policing changed from a job, typically one of several in a man's life, to a career (p. 84).

As the twentieth century began, even a heavily German city like St. Louis had an Irish police force; only 3 percent of its population had been born in Ireland, compared to one-third of its police force (Watts 1981*b*, p. 100). Of more importance was that, at the turn of the century, the total ethnic composition of police, fire, and watch organizations reflected the immigrant heritage of the city, three-fourths of whom were immigrants or children of immigrants, a figure somewhat less than that for Milwaukee, New York, or Chicago (Fogelson 1977; Watts 1981*b*, p. 99).

At the turn of the century 6 percent of St. Louis's population was black; its police department appointed its first two black police officers in 1901. Watts points out that Democrats controlled the police department and that virtually all of the city's black voters were Republicans, which suggests that politics combined with racial exclusion to account for the small number of black officers (1981*b*, pp. 105-6; 1981*c*). A

Republican governor in 1920 admitted fifteen black officers to the department, and in the immediate post-World War II era, when black voters shifted to the Democratic party, 10 percent of all new recruits were black (Watts 1981*b*, p. 107). Watts argues (1981*b*, p. 109) that many changes in the racial and ethnic composition of the St. Louis police in the twentieth century were actually the result not of reform but of larger "societal changes," such as the black shift to Democratic politics.⁵

Probably the most significant result to come from Watts's intense analysis of the individual career patterns of police officers is his discovery that over the course of the twentieth century, "no truly 'typical' pattern ever emerged" (1983*b*, p. 224). The average tenure of police officers varied highly at the beginning of the century and continued to vary through the 1970s. Moreover, actual individual careers belied the seemingly clear structural reforms and the appearance of a transformation of the police from a relatively simple and unpredictable internal structure to a highly structured and rationalized bureaucracy. Watts's conclusion that the "police in St. Louis failed to establish a uniform, coherent career pattern for its members" (1983*b*, p. 224) provides a cautionary note to the strong impression most scholars carry of the police as a Weberian bureaucracy in the process of professionalization.

IV. Police and Labor

Police control of labor in the United States has been much less direct and open than in Germany, and the recent historiography reflects a surprisingly ambiguous though still incomplete picture that is tied in large part to issues in private policing. In spite of notorious incidents, like the Memorial Day Massacre in Chicago in 1937, when police killed demonstrating workers, most recent labor history does not paint a completely antilabor picture of American police and organized labor. In fact, until the defeat of striking police officers in Boston in 1919 ended police unionization efforts for almost a half century, police themselves were often a part of the American labor movement (Walker 1980, pp. 166-69). One of the best-known labor historians, Herbert Guttman, pointed out that police sometimes sided with striking workers (Guttman 1977; see also Johnson 1976). This usually occurred in smaller cities where police budgets depended on taxes paid by workers.

⁵ Watts (1982) also demonstrates in an analysis of promotion practices that the only meaningful variable for promotion is seniority.

In small cities, police officers were often related directly to strikers or were from the same labor pool. And finally, in small cities, labor parties often gained considerable political power: Terrence V. Powderly, the founder of the Knights of Labor, also gained the mayor's seat in Scranton, a town racked with antilabor violence (not by the police). According to Walker, as far as the police were concerned, "Powderly resembled his predecessors" (1978, p. 85), making the police a part of his political machine and trying to get the city council to enlarge the force. In larger cities, police officers did not know or were not related to strikers, so at least the personal element of police/labor amicability was missing.

By far the most systematic and wide-ranging examination of police labor relations has not come from labor historians, however, but from a police historian, Sidney Haring (1983). In a study of Great Lakes cities, he has identified a strong antiunion bias of the police in Buffalo, Chicago, and Milwaukee (under a socialist government). He argues vigorously that the police in these and other cities acted as shock troops for local capitalists, pacifying and controlling local labor under the dictate of local businessmen. In Chicago, for instance, Haring (1983, pp. 121-27), has identified extensive strikebreaking activities by the city police, especially after 1910. Though his evidence for Chicago is very persuasive, it is less so for other cities where his arguments remain widely disputed and highly controversial. For instance, in Chicago in 1905, in Oshkosh in 1898, and in Akron in 1913, police "weakness" failed to curb strikes, and either private guards or the militia intervened (Haring 1983, pp. 125-31). But until further systematic research is completed, Haring's work stands as the best study of police and labor to date (Lane 1984; Terrill 1986; for a new look at police and labor, see Clark [1991]).

In one of the most famous labor disputes in the United States, the lockout in Homestead, Pennsylvania, in 1892, local police sided with the locked-out workers; Carnegie's plant officials had to hire nearly 400 Pinkerton agents to support them. The agents attacked the strikers from barges in the river, resulting in three agents and ten strikers being killed (Morn 1982, p. 103). This incident highlights two long traditions: that the police have local political ties by virtue of their local funding, and that their responsiveness to local circumstances created an opportunity for private enterprise, the private police.

In a careful institutional history of the Pinkerton National Detective Agency, Frank Morn (1982) has provided a badly needed narrative

history of the most visible and oldest form of private policing, the detective. He shows how this famous agency quickly moved from "detection to protection," becoming a "private army of capitalism." He argues that "railroad expansion [in the 1850s] quickly exposed the weaknesses of police work in a country enamored of federalism" (Morn 1982, p.24). Once a train left a city, it had no police protection: in a long-distance trip it passed through many small police regions. Pinkerton capitalized on this gap in governance in the railroad industry by providing private contractual services where no public services were available. Among other things, Pinkerton's agents "tested" employee honesty (e.g., theft by conductors) as trains rolled across the countryside. Later his business expanded to capture similar opportunities in other industries and began to include strikebreaking in instances where neither local police nor militia could or would provide assistance. In all situations, the private sector either filled in governmental interstices or took on possibly illegal activities, for instance, employee testing that involved "sting"-like operations, where Pinkerton agents tried to bribe conductors to let them ride without tickets. Agents then filed reports to the companies, who fired corruptible conductors. The question remains whether Pinkerton operatives in fact blackmailed or extorted money on occasion.

Reviewing Morn's book, Jeffreys-Jones observes that it is "the first serious monograph on private detective agencies" (1983, p. 266). He clarifies how Allen Pinkerton's prolabor radicalism was also antistrike and anticomunitarian and how in the United States Pinkerton could be a reformer yet also work against all labor violence. Moreover, Jeffreys-Jones sets a research agenda for more work to be done on the history of private detective agencies as part of the history of private policing, including divorce work and family law, with a suggestion of new primary sources. His brief but important essay provides the starting point for the next round of historical research.

Yet the role of such private armies did not pass unscrutinized. The Homestead incident shocked the nation and prompted a federal investigation that resulted in no federal legislation but in antidetective legislation in many states (Morn 1982, pp. 91-109). The irony of the Pinkerton agency's antilabor reputation came from Allan Pinkerton's widely publicized prolabor radicalism that had forced him to leave Scotland in the 1840s. The company was embarrassed by the Homestead fiasco and actually did little strike work for ten years after it. However, antilabor activity could include more than strikebreaking, and by the

1930s the company was a leader in the industrial espionage field, with over 1,000 operatives in all major unions (Morn 1982, p. 187). Again the focus of an embarrassing federal investigation and exposé, the Pinkerton agency left these activities by 1940, slowly moving into the private security business (Morn 1982, p. 192).

Private police like the Pinkerton and Burns agencies gained their economic advantage by moving across political regions, using means of dubious legality, and working only for the moneyed. But they were not the only private police, for another form of nonmunicipally controlled police has been present in American cities since the 1890s, consisting of privately employed off-duty police officers and, more important, public officers appointed and employed solely by private organizations. Rebecca Reed's (1986) work on Detroit has shown how these officers, their commissions issued by the police department, grew in numbers as crime (indicated by the homicide rate) and population increased while the per capita police budget decreased (p. 5). About one-fourth of these officers were employed by other municipal agencies, and about two-thirds were employed by businesses (p. 10). In essence, businesses hiring these officers simply eliminated the services of detective agencies. She also has evidence that the police department was "reluctant" to let the police be used in strikes and that these privately employed police may have been business's response to the official aversion to strikebreaking (pp. 11-13).

Recent work on a famous teamsters strike in Minneapolis in 1934 supports Reed's insights. The so-called Citizens' Alliance was in fact a group of businessmen vigilantes who supplemented the police in the strike. Formed in 1917 to keep Minneapolis an "open shop" city, it successfully "eliminated the political threat of the WPNPL [Working People's Nonpartisan League of the Minneapolis trade unions] and the NPL [Nonpartisan League], deunionized the Minneapolis police, maintained an effective intelligence service, and helped establish a Highway Patrol and a Bureau of Criminal Apprehension headed by men it could trust" (Millikan 1989, p. 233). Its political clout and credibility ended when its members tried to drive and guard trucks to keep goods flowing in the strike. Armed with clubs and guns, the vigilantes actually got into armed conflict with the strikers, where their amateurish aggression resulted in deaths. After this misadventure, one in which the governor intervened on the side of the strikers, the Citizens' Alliance did not disband but instead hired parapolice to do investigative and patrol work (Millikan 1989). In essence, this private group

used force of dubious legality to supplement the legitimate police when they were unwilling to step over the bounds of legitimate action.

V. Reforming Police

Often police have stepped over bounds of legitimate action, and corruption has been a persistent problem in U.S. policing. The Lexow Commission (created by the New York State Legislature in 1894), gained national prominence during its investigation of the New York City police and a subsequent exposé of corruption (Berman 1987, pp. 23–29). Similar reforms occurred in other large cities for the next three decades (Fogelson 1977). Sherman (1978) has observed that waves of scandal and reform have run in twenty-year cycles since the Lexow Commission investigation of New York City police corruption. He argues that “virtually every urban police department in the United States has experienced both organized corruption and a major scandal over that corruption” (Sherman 1978, p. xxiii). Reforms following scandal, he contends, have often been successful, but control of scandal, like control of crime itself, is hampered by fundamental freedoms. As opposed to most crime, however, scandal arises under fairly predictable conditions, usually surrounding vice operations. Historians have shown the long connection of police corruption with prostitution, drugs (including alcohol when illegal), and gambling (see Haller [1990], pp. 212–13, for a good brief summary; Best 1981; McKanna 1984). The potential for scandal is made most clear in those episodes when cities tried, for health reasons, to regulate prostitution without legalizing it. By the turn of the century, local political machines depended on these semilegitimate vice districts, the bribes from vice entrepreneurs funding the machines. (In some cases, elected nonmachine governments depended on the revenues from such fines, e.g., the small city of East Grand Forks, Minnesota, in the pre–World War I era [Sylvester 1989].) Since the 1960s, federal investigations of police corruption have reduced the ability of local vice entrepreneurs to control police (Haller 1990).

Earlier police historians had envisioned the first decades of the twentieth century as the dawn of scientific policing, a notion associated with Berkeley’s famous chief August Vollmer, Richard Sylvester of Washington, D.C., the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the serious communication among scholars and various segments of the crime control community through the pages of the *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, which began publication in 1909 (John-

son 1981, p. 70). Yet recent work has made this clean, Progressive Era picture more complex. For instance, as Watts's work (1983*b*) has shown, the emergence of a more professional police force did not result in more orderly career paths for St. Louis police officers, implying that the bureaucracy did not have the organizational rationality earlier observers had envisioned.

Nor did shedding by police of service activities and focusing on crime-related arrests conform to the professional picture being painted by prominent police officers like August Vollmer. Vollmer, elected town marshall of Berkeley in 1905, where he supervised a force of three nonuniformed officers, soon became famous and influential. He achieved publicity in local and national newspapers, wrote extensively in the professional journals, and published several well-respected books. His innovations included a counseling clinic with a psychiatric social worker, Elisabeth Lossing, and an aggressive policing policy that emphasized intervention in personal affairs and prevention through methods prescribed by the latest ideas of the mental hygiene movement (Liss and Schlossman 1984). The most recent scholarship on Vollmer denies his widely acclaimed genius without denigrating his considerable achievements: "Rather than an original thinker, Vollmer's strengths lay in finding ingenious practical applications of ideas he borrowed from others, in carefully supervising the implementation of a wide variety of technical and procedural innovations, and, perhaps, most importantly, in maintaining high personal involvement and exercising decisive leadership in community affairs that impinged on police functions" (Liss and Schlossman 1984, p. 81).

It is important to see the shift Vollmer represented and advocated as not directly countering the narrowing police function or as returning to the multiservice police of the nineteenth century. His intervention and social work orientation and his genuine sympathy for and stern guidance of troubled people were directed toward the end of crime prevention. Earlier, police had taken in the homeless as a sort of municipal housekeeping. This function was in fact technically implied by the legal notion of "police power" that meant the power of a state or its local governments literally to do housekeeping, from cleaning streets to creating an orderly public arena. Vollmer's new and generous vision of policing was oriented toward the prevention of individual criminal actions.

This same vision enabled police to respond in new ways to old problems. During World War II, vicious race riots in several cities

took the lives of African Americans and Mexican Americans. More to the point, the police not only failed to control the riots but were in many cases part of the problem. Thurgood Marshall compared the Detroit police to the Gestapo; some police officers saw the riots as providing fuel for Nazi anti-American propaganda (Walker 1980, p. 231). From these experiences, Milwaukee police chief Joseph Kluchesky earned a national reputation for his race relations training program in Milwaukee in 1944. In the same year, the International City Manager Association published a manual on police relations with minority groups that became widely used throughout the United States. Walker found twenty-two cities adopting some race relations training between 1943 and 1950 (to be sure, in some cities this involved little more than a two-hour lecture) (Walker 1980, pp. 236–38). However, the lack of urban riots after World War II until the 1960s never really tested the effectiveness of these programs or their companion antiriot strategies, leaving the police with untested and feebly implemented programs when the urban riots of the 1960s began (Walker 1980, p. 242).

While much has been written about the urban riots and the civil rights movement, no historian has yet tackled these episodes and the police roles in them in a systematic way. For instance, the Little Rock police attained considerable notoriety in 1957 and 1958 for their morally repugnant refusal to protect black children in the school integration crisis. Did such outrages as these, exposed on the national television, prompt public support for stronger federal standards in all areas of law enforcement? Did the question of racial fairness make an impact in other cities that did not gain media attention? Atlanta marketed itself as the “city too busy to hate” at the very same time. Did other urban boosters strive to make their cities and police fairer for latent economic incentives? And in the 1960s, did the impact of seeing riots on national television have an equal if different impact (Williams and Murphy 1990)?

VI. Federal-Local Policy Issues

As these visible urban problems in which the police were inextricably involved gained public attention, scholars turned to researching local police departments. The work of the 1960s and 1970s focused intensely on local aspects of policing, on detailed studies of individual police departments, and on questions of the social side of policing (see Kelling and Stewart [1991] for the best survey of this recent history). Implicit

in all of the work was the recognition that policing in the United States was an activity done by local governments. Historians ignored issues of larger political entities in order to assess the details of the actual local systems. But now some historians whose earlier work began in the arena of the local police have turned toward these other issues relating to the nature of the federal system and policing. In so doing they bring their sensitivity to the all-too-often ignored importance of the local system and its relations to the federal system. The significance of their work is in its clear comprehension of the high visibility of federal levels of policing and of federal policing's relatively small scope compared to local policy. This work represents only a beginning. The working out of the appropriate theoretical context has only begun (Miller 1986). The work of Athan Theoharis (1978, 1981) has focused on the issues of "intelligence and legality" and the long conflict they represent within the mission of the FBI. Ernest Alix (1978) has published a unique study on a single criminal offense, kidnapping, which includes an examination of the federalization of this crime and its incorporation into the purview of the FBI. But most work on the FBI has not considered the context of policing or the nature of criminal law in the United States, and as a result, it is too often journalistic, attending to particular aspects without relating them to any larger context, or deals with abuses, in particular, FBI abuses of power.

Wilbur Miller's work (1989) represents a pioneering approach to federal law enforcement. Examining the issue of collecting federal revenue on alcohol production in the South, he highlights both the scope and limits of this early form of federal policing. While he draws no explicit comparison with current drug enforcement today, the contemporary comparison with the too-often romanticized illegal production of the nineteenth-century drug of choice, liquor, is obvious. The revenue collectors were sometimes corrupt; moonshiners often resisted violently, killing ten revenue collectors between July 1877 and June 1878 (Miller 1989, p. 201); there was also internal violence in the moonshine business. After 1879, federal troops accompanied revenue collectors (Miller 1989, pp. 206-8). People in rural communities, often women, did not all approve of the illegal liquor and secretly informed to the revenue collectors. The question of moonshine, Miller makes clear, is the question of state penetration into illegal business, just as it is today with nonalcoholic drugs. Successful federal efforts were characterized by consistent and fair prosecution, a system of fines and suspended sentences that could be revoked if the defendant resumed illegal alcohol

production. By the end of the nineteenth century, popular support for moonshine had dramatically eroded because of the consistent and judicious federal effort, so that moonshiners were often denounced as “gangs of lazy, bad men . . . of general worthlessness” (Miller 1989, p. 212). While for Miller the important contrast in the research is with federal failure to enforce civil rights, he might well have made the contrast with current efforts on drug enforcement.

One hopes that further work on federal policing will supplement Miller's work so that we may begin to understand the nature of policing across the American social and political landscape. His central argument is perhaps of more interest to historians and political scientists than to those in the criminal justice fields: the historiography that emphasizes the failure of Reconstruction to protect black citizens in the South “overlooks the internal revenue system, a product of the Civil War that became a permanent element of expanded national authority” (Miller 1989, p. 196). This insight suggests that “expanded national authority” and policing do have an important connecting link: federal laws are enforced through a wide variety of organizations, and too often writers attend only to the FBI as a unique institution. One hopes that Miller's recentering of thinking about national law enforcement by highlighting a forgotten aspect of national policing will provoke other historians into looking at other federal policing systems—the park police, for instance, as examined by Mackintosh (1985) in an internal history that does not link this agency to the broader context of police history or the police of Washington, D.C., which in spite of their federal mandate have a past quite like that of other cities (*Statutory History* 1985).

David R. Johnson's (1991) work on federal policing combines two approaches, one emphasizing federal crime—counterfeiting—and the other focusing on large bureaucracies and state building. He argues that the “fitful” and “obscure” process behind the creation of a federal police followed from the creation of federal authority over currency during the Civil War (Johnson 1991, pp. 1, 7). Subtly using currency and counterfeiting as his topic, Johnson directly relates the question of state building to the chasing of counterfeiters, showing how the creation of a nation-state required a strong currency, which in turn boosted the creation of a small national police. He details how both criminals and federal agents operated in a local and highly irregular manner. Stuart Traub (1988), writing on the use of rewards in the American West, has evidence that both local governments and U.S.

marshalls, reporting directly to the attorney general, used rewards as an attempt to compensate people for catching, and often killing, known offenders. He argues that rewards were a rational way to communicate and provide crime control in lieu of an efficiently organized state, although he notes that the system encouraged murder rather than trials (Traub 1988, p. 299). Unlike Johnson, he links his analysis neither to theoretical questions surrounding local and federal policing nor to state building, clearly the essential missing element in the U.S. West.⁶

Craig Uchida's work on the early FBI clarifies its origins in the Bureau of Investigation, begun by President Roosevelt in 1908. He provides a clear bridge to local policing by showing how this federal organization was begun by a politician expert in the ways and limitations of city police from his term as New York City police commissioner. Roosevelt mandated that the Bureau of Investigation initiate criminal investigations for crimes spreading beyond local felonies—beginning with political land frauds. While not explicitly understood as a structural problem related to the federal system, Roosevelt's agency indeed focused on those felonies that were simply beyond the scope of local police. Rather than seeing Roosevelt's actions as purely politically motivated, one might instead draw a comparison with Progressive reformers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, who, Jeffrey-Jones contends (1978), exaggerated the amount and fear of labor violence in order to accomplish their electoral and legislative goals. In other words, reformers exaggerated fears to accomplish somewhat different ends.

Some of this recent police history has raised policy issues that cut across other features of local governments and services. Police, like schools, provide labor-intensive services that do not seem to be easily replaced by technology. Greater bureaucratic complexity has not broken down tasks to simple elements easily performed by machines, and such does not seem to be a realistic expectation. Local governments have the potential of doing some things much better than they now do (e.g., traffic control), but policing and schooling do not have such rosy futures. Perhaps this is one reason why they both remain at the center of controversy: the jobs get no easier, and the bureaucracies no more efficient with the passage of time and the growth of expertise. Equally important, the efficiency of these labor-intensive services seems to have

⁶ For the best description of local violence in the West, see McGrath's (1984) study of mining towns.

an inverse relationship to city size: at some size, the bigger the city, the more costly and perhaps less efficient the service, whether school or police (Monkkonen 1983).

The history of police raises some difficult theoretical questions about urban government and has unclear implications for policing. Paul Peterson (1981), in *City Limits*, argues that policing is an "allocational" function of city government, meaning that it is neutral in relation to the city's long-run expectations for increased or decreased revenue. As the history of the police makes clear, their functional change over time renders Peterson's analysis problematic, while at the same time making his overall model even more useful. In the nineteenth century, police clearly performed part of the city's welfare or distributional function. As the police shifted to a crime-control emphasis, they became essential to the city's promotional functions in that they helped provide a safer environment for urban economic activities.

Following Peterson's larger argument, that distributional activities migrate to the highest, most geographically capacious, level of government, while promotional activities stay at the smallest geographical units of government, then his theory could help describe and explain why policing changed from broad class control to more narrow crime control. Given the historic limitations of American policing to small locales and the strong tradition prohibiting the creation of a state or national police system as in Europe, the police came under steady pressure to change what they did. As distributional actors, cities were under competitive constraints to spend less on welfare services, including those accomplished by the police, while at the same time they were under pressure to attract revenue-enhancing activities by providing crime-free environments. The fixed location of American police would then account for their turn to crime control and away from welfare in contrast to the continued welfare and broader service orientation (class control) of European police (Weinberger and Reinke 1989). This constraint would also help account for the relatively low amount of development of crime-control-oriented policing at the state and federal levels despite tremendous political and social pressure for more effective crime control. Crime control, then, would not migrate to the national level until local revenue enhancing disappeared, an unlikely scenario given the long history of local government. If one imagines an international scenario in which the United States will have to make itself crime-free to attract investment, then might crime control move to broader levels of government?

VII. Conclusion

The research of the past decade gives scholars a much deeper context and much greater empirical knowledge in which to understand current policing. As Lane's essay of 1980 synthesizes the pioneering generation of police historians, this essay builds on the maturing field. This generation has had the advantage of a growing body of research and a broad spectrum of theoretical perspectives, from the Marxism of Sidney Haring to the interdisciplinary approach of John Schneider. It has been much more synthetic than the work of the pioneering generation of the 1960s and 1970s. My overview and history (Monkkonen 1981*b*) pulled information from dozens of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century local police histories. In addition, it and the articles of Watts introduced new levels of statistical analyses to the field. Friedman and Percival's (1981) study of Alameda County looked at the whole criminal justice system—police, the courts, law, lawyers, offenders, jails, the media. Schneider's (1980) work on Detroit mapped arrests and police distribution, and tied the social and economic geography of the city to the nineteenth-century development of its police and crime. And Emsley (1983) published the first scholarly history of policing in Europe and England, enabling American scholars to begin to appreciate more deeply the complex differences between North America and Europe.

This new stage of sophistication was matched on another level, too. On the international scene, a loose affiliation of scholars known as the Dutch Group put together international scholarly conferences on crime history. Organizing a larger meeting in conjunction with the seventh International Economic History Congress in Edinburgh in 1978, this group created a new, more formal, organization and publication, the *International Association for the History of Crime and Criminal Justice Newsletter* in 1979. Published by the Fondation de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris, the newsletter began the complex task of coordinating and informing researchers about the varied and rich research being conducted around the world in criminal justice history (Monkkonen 1984). The work of this group introduced Americans to the historical sociology of Norbert Elias, whose generous theoretical approach underwrites much contemporary European scholarship. One year later in the United States, the journal *Criminal Justice History* appeared. An annual serial, it publishes international scholarship and with its first issue established itself as a serious scholarly journal.

The research developments discussed in this essay suggest a diverse

research agenda. For instance, Steinberg (1989) raises a two-pronged challenge, the first to find sources that will permit the documentation of prepolice modes of criminal justice. He has found fragmentary evidence on alderman's courts. We need similar sources on church courts; Kasserman (1986) has documented the Methodists' exclusion of a young woman for prostitution, while Waldrep (1990) has systematic evidence on church trials and county court trials for a rural county in late nineteenth-century Kentucky. He argues that a decline in church trials preceded a rise in felony court prosecutions. Similar work also must be done in labor union court records. Garlock (1982), for instance, has documented the Knights of Labor courts in the late nineteenth century, showing that the expulsions mainly were for offenses having to do with union affairs but that the court structure of the union was specifically designed as a fairer alternative to the existing police and judicial machinery. He quotes Terrence Powderly: "They [working men] have long perceived that at the hands of advocates, justices and police, they get an immense amount of *law*, but no *justice*" (p. 29). Finally, excellent recent studies of vigilantism and crime show the need for further systematic work on the power of the state and crime control (Ball 1980; Little and Sheffield 1983; McGrath 1984; Ethington 1987). We also need comparable, systematic research on the constable watch system. This is essential if we are to understand the transition to the police and a formal, state-run, justice system.

Steinberg's (1989) second challenge is his argument that in many ways the quantity as well as quality of local crime control decreased after the introduction of the police. This is a stimulating assertion and should attract the research efforts of historians.

Work by McDowell and Loftin (1984) provides a model for research design in historical studies. Constructing a long fifty-year data series of police behavior and expenditures, and paying careful attention to the population denominator, they reexamine the role of expenditures on policing in Detroit. While they find a weak relationship between expenditures and apprehension rates, their article is of more importance for its demonstration of the feasibility of doing long time-series research. Its research design is clearly generalizable to other sites, and it should provide a beginning orientation for future studies.

How do police relate to issues of public order, from misdemeanors to riots? In spite of all the research, there has yet to be a research design capable of convincingly testing counterfactuals, that is, asking what cities would have been (or be) like without the police. Schneider

(1980) has systematically examined the relationship of police to riots in the mid-nineteenth century, looking also at cities where there were no riots. (He argues that Detroit Germans and Irish had residential and journey-to-work patterns that minimized the friction that caused riots in other cities.) No historian has examined twentieth-century riots and police in such a systematic way. If urban rioting declined with the introduction of policing, did this reflect effective riot control, the consequence of a visible control mechanism, or an independent increase in urban order? The late nineteenth-century decline in violent crimes and in accidental deaths suggests the latter, but a project specifically designed to test these alternatives has yet to be conducted (Lane 1979; Gurr 1989).

We still need to know far more about the police themselves. Were nonurban police and private police so active in labor control that the local police could remain relatively absent? What has been the impact of police training and civil service rules (Johnson 1981)? Did the slow change in police technology indicate a resistance to innovation detrimental to crime control? Did the transition from more generalized class surveillance and control to crime control wipe out an important urban welfare service? The question of productivity in a labor-intensive service like policing (and also school teaching) implicitly plagues most analyses: little has been done to estimate the contributions of technological change to productivity and then to estimate the total changes in policing.

The question of police and order has special significance for southern cities, where the work of Rousey on New Orleans suggests a very different development path from the North's. Rousey (1984) has also shown how New Orleans in the second half of the nineteenth century was far more violent than northern cities. This extended to the police, often with disastrous results. In the period 1863–90, police officers more often shot bystanders than did civilian shooters. In addition, police officers were more likely to be killed by fellow officers than by civilians (p. 57).

Rousey shows how the police of New Orleans were essentially a military force, patrolling the city primarily to control slaves (Rousey, n.d.). It is not yet clear whether we should even call the "city guard" police, for with their swords, armory, and uniforms, they much more represented a European style urban military: they were at first called, in 1805, the *Gendarmerie*. The New Orleans police were demilitarized later in the century, and the post-Civil War police represented the

city's first modern police system. The contrast between the South and the North in the pre-Civil War era suggests that an unfree society cannot support a modern police system. Systematic comparison both of organization and behavior can make clearer these regional differences and in the process show how the issues of liberty, partisan politics, and the legitimacy of the state directly affect policing. Thus further opportunities for police history research go in several directions, from policy to urban political theory to fundamental issues of democracy and liberty.

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