- What kinds of specific forces might influence a department's inability to change its uniforms, its rank structure, or other elements of traditional policing?
- Do the forces you have just identified act only as restraints, in the sense that they only inhibit change in police organizations? Or, might these same forces also act as enablers, supporting some changes in policing while trying to thwart others?
- Recent research has demonstrated that many police organizations have begun to adopt gang units to focus specifically on youth gang problems. However, many police organizations without a gang problem have also adopted gang units. What kinds of forces might lead a police organization in a community without a gang problem to adopt a gang unit?

3. Both chapters in this section have chosen police organizations as their units of analysis. Both are premised on the assumption that police organizations vary in important ways, and that understanding why they vary is important. But theories of policing need not just explore variation across police organizations. They can also explore variation in policing across police officers, across geographic districts within police departments, across states, or across nations. In other words, there are many potential units of analysis in criminal justice theories that focus on policing. With this in mind:
   - Select a unit of analysis other than police organizations.
   - Select a dependent variable; something that varies across the unit you have chosen.
   - Select one or more independent variables that you believe plays a role in influencing the variation in your dependent variable.
4. Once you have answered these questions, you have started to generate a theory about some aspect of policing. When you read chapters 7 and 8 in part III, return to this police theory and ask yourself what steps you should take before you would go to all the time and expense of gathering data about your theory. What suggestions do Kautt and Spohn and Worden have to assist you in determining whether your theory is worth pursuing, or how it can be modified to make it stronger?

5

EXPLAINING POLICE ORGANIZATIONS[1]

Edward R. Maguire and Craig D. Uchida

INTRODUCTION

The introductory chapters in this volume have established the basic boundaries of criminal justice theory. This chapter examines one tradition of research and theory in criminal justice: efforts to identify the factors responsible for producing departmental variations in policing. We explore the ways that various features of police organizations have been explained over time and place. Police organizations share much in common, but they also exhibit tremendous variation. Some are large, but many are quite small; some patrol aggressively, arresting offenders for minor public order offenses, while others enforce the law with less vigor; some have tall hierarchies and formal command structures, while others are less formal, with only a handful of separate levels; some work closely with communities and spend time formulating customized solutions to local problems, while others shun community involvement and provide more "traditional" police services. This variation in both what organizations *do* and what they *are* is not unique to police agencies. As W. R. Scott (1992, 1) notes, "while organizations may possess common, generic characteristics, they exhibit staggering variety — in size, in structure, and in operating processes." This chapter explores efforts to explain variation in American police organizations: variation in what they are and what they do; variation in form and function, in structure and process, in policy and practice.

The subject of this chapter is police *organizations*. The study of police agencies as organizations is a growing field, owing its theoretical roots to the sociological and social psychological study of organizations more generally.[2] This focus on police as organizations is the common thread linking each section of the chapter. Thus, we do not examine other frequently studied features of policing, including police culture, police discretionary behaviors (and misbehaviors), individual police officer attributes, and many other important phenomena occurring at units of analysis that are larger (e.g., states or nations) or smaller (e.g., officers or workgroups) than police organizations.[3]

Furthermore, the focus of this chapter is on broad organizational properties rather than particular policies, programs, activities, or structural features. Researchers have produced a wealth of valuable research on particular features of police organizations such as pursuit policies; DARE programs; the use of one- and two-officer patrol cars; and the establishment of special units for various tasks, such as narcotics, child abuse, or gangs. The line between general and specific organizational properties is admittedly arbitrary. Nevertheless, the focus of the chapter is to draw together a diverse body of scholarship on American police organizations. Research on very specific (and sometimes esoteric or idiosyncratic) organizational properties will make it much more difficult to consolidate this vast body of theory and research. Thus, while we do not discuss the prevalence of specialized bias-crime units, we do discuss specialization more generally; we do not discuss the implementation of various new technologies for processing offenders, but we do examine the adoption of innovation; we do not discuss drunk driving enforcement or use of force, but we do discuss aggressive patrol strategies and styles of policing.

There is some ambiguity over what constitutes a police organization (Maguire, Snipes et al. 1998). As Bayley (1985, 7) notes, "police come in a bewildering variety of forms ... moreover, many agencies that are not thought of as police nonetheless possess 'police' powers." To reduce the scope of our task, we shall focus on public police organizations in the United States whose primary purpose is to provide generalized police service, including responding to calls-for-service for a distinct residential population.[4]

Even after narrowing the focus in this way, there remain considerable variations among police organizations over time and place.[5] A substantial body of theory and research has developed to measure and explain these variations. As one way to organize the large body of scholarship on police organizations, we draw an important distinction between what they *do* and what they *are*. These categories sometimes overlap in practice, but there is some precedent in the development of organization theory for treating them separately.

WHAT POLICE ORGANIZATIONS DO

Like corporate America, police organizations do many things. Most people are unaccustomed to thinking of *organizations* as doing things. After all, organizations are comprised of people, and it is the people within them who think, plan, act, decide, debate, respond, cooperate, and all of the other activities and behaviors in which *people* engage. Yet, as Maguire (2003, 9–10) has argued:

> Organizations are greater than the sum of their parts. They expand and contract, rise and fall, and generally take on lives of their own. Organizations, like individuals and social groups, do not only act, but are acted upon as well. They are influenced, shaped and constrained by a complex interaction of political, social, economic, cultural, and institutional forces. Organizations exhibit patterned regularities, and they can (and indeed should) be studied apart from the people within them (Blau et al., 1966; Blau and Schoenherr, 1971).

Work by King and his colleagues (1997) takes this argument one step further, using a biological or life-course perspective to study the birth, death, and aging processes of police agencies. Thinking about organizations as separate from the people within them — as "corporate persons"— is essential to understanding what they do (Coleman 1974).

Police organizations do many things: they make arrests, quell disturbances, respond to emergencies, solve problems, form relationships with the community, and other activities too numerous to summarize briefly. These activities constitute the output of police organizations. Systematic collection of data from large samples of police agencies has shown that there is considerable variation in the quantity and quality of these outputs over time and place. These data are used in many ways: arrest and clearance statistics, for instance, are frequently used as measures of a police organization's productivity. The use of these kinds of performance indicators is beginning to fall out of fashion as police executives, scholars, and reformers focus on alternative measures. These data are also used as indicators of a police organization's "style."[6] Some agencies may emphasize aggressive enforcement of panhandling ordinances, for instance, while others may tend to ignore such minor offenses. While the concept of organizational style is intangible and difficult to measure, researchers have attempted to draw inferences about

policing styles by examining arrest patterns for discretionary offenses such as drunkenness or disorderly conduct (Wilson 1968b). While police organizations do many different things, data are systematically collected on only a handful of these activities. Organizational measures constructed from these data are therefore limited.

One focus of this chapter is to examine variations in police activities, processes, performance, and style over time and across agencies. We will trace efforts to explain what police organizations do, from the traditional focus on arrests and clearances, to more recent efforts to embrace problem-solving and community partnership strategies.

WHAT POLICE ORGANIZATIONS ARE

What a police organization *does* is external, typically taking place outside of the organization: in the community, on the streets, in residences. The features that define what a police organization *is* tend to be internal: administrative arrangements, processing routines, structures, communication patterns, and overall "corporate" personalities.[7] In short, what police organizations *do*, takes place within the framework (or context) of what they *are*. The social scientific study of what police organizations are has a much shorter history than the study of what they do. This history parallels a similar split in the study of organizations more generally. While outputs and performance have always been a primary focus of organizational research, it wasn't until the late 1950s that "researchers began to conceive of organizations as more than just rationally-derived mechanisms for the production of goods and services, but as entities worthy of understanding for what they *are* in addition to what they *produce*" (Maguire 2003, 9).

The internal features of police organizations vary considerably from one agency to the next. Researchers began to measure this variation using systematic surveys in about the late 1920s. Attempts to explain this variation came later, with theoretical explanations appearing in the 1960s and empirical studies beginning in the mid-1970s. Much of this research focuses on why we have the police organizations we have, seeking to isolate local contingencies (such as regional, historical, governmental, cultural, or demographic factors) that would lead to variations in police organizational form from one jurisdiction to another.

EXPLANATION

The first step in explaining why differences exist between police organizations (or any social entity, from people to nations) is to measure those differences. The problems in measuring the properties of police organizations are noteworthy, though there is not sufficient space in this chapter to explore measurement issues in detail (Maguire and Uchida 2000). Once researchers have measured variation in police organizations, the next natural step is to ask why such differences exist. That is the goal of explanation. Like measurement, explanation is one of the principal goals of social science research. Social scientists usually arrive at explanations for social phenomena through induction and deduction. Using the inductive method, they begin by collecting data and then analyze or search for patterns in the data. Based on their observations and analyses, they develop theories. Using the deductive method, they begin by specifying a theory, and then collect and analyze data to test the theory. In reality, these two processes tend to overlap. Frequently, social scientists begin by stating an explicit theory and collecting data to test the theory (deductive method). Upon finding only partial support for the theory in the data, they will often modify the theory accordingly (inductive method).

Police organizations, like many other units of analysis studied by social scientists, vary widely on some dimensions, and are very similar on others. When social scientists use the term *explanation*, they are nearly always referring to explanations for why some trait varies across time and place. For instance, some police organizations are steeped heavily in paramilitary culture, while others appear to be more democratic and less rigid. When social scientists try to "explain" paramilitarism in police organizations, they mean that they are trying to explain why some organizations are more paramilitary than are others. In other words, explanations in social science nearly always have the goal of *explaining variation* among units of analysis.[8]

If, for example, we believe police organizations in turbulent political climates are less productive (say, in terms of clearance rates) than others, then to properly test the theory, we must collect data from a sample of police organizations in different political climates. If we were to only study police organizations in hostile political climates, we could not test the theory because we would have nothing with which to compare them (in social science terms, this test would be flawed because the independent *variable* does not *vary*). A similar logical flaw, in which the dependent variable does not vary, is present in much of the current popular management literature. Many of the books in this genre study successful companies, identifying attributes that are common across each. The flaw, of course, is that these same attributes might be present in unsuccessful companies, but we cannot know for sure because they

were not studied (Aupperle et al. 1986; King 1999, personal communication to Maguire).[9]

Thus, the key to developing, testing, modifying, and understanding social science explanations is *comparison*. The comparative method has come to be associated with multinational research, but comparative research can focus on many types of organized collectivities, from police departments and schools, to nations and societies (Blau et al., 1966; Ostrom 1973; Ragin 1987). It is a cornerstone of sociological research on organizations (Langworthy 1986; W. R. Scott 1992). The comparative method is featured prominently throughout this volume.

The selection of a unit of analysis within which to conduct comparisons depends heavily on the research question. If our research question focuses on why some police organizations are more effective than are others, our unit of analysis is police organizations. If, on the other hand, our interest is in how a single organization changes over time, our unit of analysis is the organization at specific points in time (like the month or year). Sometimes the unit of analysis is more complex, combining cross-sections (organizations) and times (years). For instance, if we want to determine whether changing the number of officers in municipal police departments has an effect on clearance rates, we would need to collect and analyze data from multiple organizations at multiple times. Whether we are comparing multiple organizations, the same organization at multiple times, or both simultaneously, comparison is central to understanding social science explanations.

This section examines how social scientists have sought to develop explanations for various features of police organizations. Throughout this section, the concepts we have just discussed — explaining variation, units of analysis, and comparison — will appear over and over again as central and important themes. The most common unit of analysis in our discussion is the individual police organization, and the studies we discuss usually allow for comparisons by including observations from a sample of such organizations. Nearly all of these studies are focused on explaining why some police organizations are different from others, isolating the causal factors thought to be responsible for these variations. One thing that should become very clear throughout the remainder of this chapter is how measurement is inextricably linked with explanation (Maguire and Uchida 2000).

EXPLAINING VARIATION IN POLICE ORGANIZATIONS

The scholarly study of variation in police organizations was born in the early 1960s. Following a trend in the sociology of organizations and the administrative sciences more generally, policing scholars began to devote serious attention to the role of the environment in determining the nature of a police organization. Organizational scholars of that era were profoundly influenced by a series of studies stressing the importance of the environment on organizations. Burns and Stalker (1961), Eisenstadt (1959), Emery and Trist (1965), and Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) introduced a new way of thinking about organizations and their problems. Based on their influence, scholars, managers, and others interested in organizational life could now be heard talking about the "fit" between an organization and its environment. The environment consists of everything external to an organization that is important for its functioning and survival. "Funding agencies, raw materials, clients, potential employees, the media, politicians, rumors, legislation, and employees' unions all reside in an organization's environment" (Maguire 2003, 26).

Initial discussions of the linkage between police organizations and their environments were both subtle and implicit. For instance, Stinchcombe (1963) argued that the distribution of public and private spaces within a community has important effects on administrative practices and aggregate patterns of police behavior. Of particular importance here is his notion that different concentrations of public places within communities might account for differences between urban and rural policing. At around the same time, Wilson (1963) developed a theory linking the professionalism of police agencies to local government structure and political ethos. Though both of these early works seem to have disappeared from the landscape of modern police scholarship, they helped to plant the seeds for a growing wave of police research and theory.

Presumably influenced by these earlier works both inside and outside the study of policing, Reiss and Bordua (1967) highlighted some of the effects that the environment might have on police organizations.[10] They argued that the environmental perspective was especially important for police organizations, since "the police have as their fundamental task the creation and maintenance of, and their participation in, external relationships" (Reiss and Bordua 1967, 25–26). Reiss and Bordua described the "internal consequences" of three broad environmental features: the nature of the legal system, the nature of illegal activity, and the structure of civic accountability. They also noted several other environmental features that might be important in shaping police organizations. It is perhaps one indicator of the halting progress in the study of police organizations since the mid-1970s that important theoretical propositions outlined by Reiss and Bordua still have not been empirically tested.[11]

These early works had the effect of focusing attention on some of the factors responsible for variation in police organizations — both what they are and what they do — across time and space. Yet, the appearance in 1968 of James Q. Wilson's *Varieties of Police Behavior* signified the first attempt to formulate a theory of police departments *as organizations* and test the theory using a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods (Langworthy 1986; Maguire 2003). Wilson's book continues to influence police scholarship today, though sadly, empirical research has yet to test the full range of Wilson's propositions (Slovak 1986).[12] Nevertheless, these early works set the stage for three decades of research on interagency variation in police organizations. With this brief historical backdrop in mind, we now discuss the evolution of this body of research, starting with what police organizations do.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON WHAT POLICE ORGANIZATIONS DO

In this section, we discuss various efforts to explain some of the external features of American police organizations, including their outputs, styles, and performance. *Varieties of Police Behavior* (Wilson 1968b) was the first and most influential attempt to explain the outputs and behaviors of police agencies (their arrest rates and styles of policing). Wilson's theory essentially posited that local contingencies such as characteristics of the population, the form of government, and political culture, shape agency behaviors (and therefore outputs). Wilson's work was the first in a long line of research on the causes and correlates of police organizational outputs, which are most frequently operationalized as aggregate-level arrest rates for various offenses (Crank 1990; Langworthy 1985; Monkkonen 1981; Slovak 1986; Swanson 1978).[13] More recent research extends these traditional output measures to include community policing activities, attempting to generate theoretical and empirical explanations for interagency variation in these activities (Maguire, Kuhns et al. 1997; Zhao 1996). Overall, this body of research seeks to determine whether the environmental, historical, and other contextual circumstances (known in organization theory as contingencies)[14] of police organizations play a role in shaping their outputs and performance. This literature includes a broad range of theoretical explanations that have not yet been tested empirically (e.g., Crank 1994; Crank and Langworthy 1992; Duffee 1990). In addition, there is a large body of empirical research in this area that ranges from being nearly atheoretical to almost wholly guided by theory.

Maguire and Uchida (2000) identify twenty studies seeking to explain variation in what police organizations do. All of these studies meet several criteria: (1) the dependent variable is an organizational property; (2) there is at least one explanatory variable; (3) the study is based on quantitative data; (4) it reports the results of a statistical analysis (loosely defined) of the data; and (5) the total number of observations in the analysis is at least twenty (to allow for adequate comparison). In addition, since their focus is on what police organizations do, they do not include studies in which the dependent variable is a measure of crime. Although police organizations may have an effect on crime rates, crime is not necessarily an organizational property; in the parlance of performance measurement, it is an *outcome* rather than an *output*.[15] The remainder of this section explores some of the issues that Maguire and Uchida (2000) identify based on these twenty studies.

Wilson (1968b) was the first to use quantitative data from a sample of police agencies in an attempt to explain what police organizations do. This analysis was separate from the well-known details of his taxonomy of police styles (legalistic, watchman, and service). Wilson's theory was that local political culture constrains (but does not dictate) the style of policing within a community. Wilson argued that measuring both style and political culture would be "exceptionally difficult if not impossible" (p. 271). Nevertheless, considering it to be a worthwhile exercise, he constructed a "substitute" measure of political culture focusing on the form of government, the partisanship of elections, and the professionalism of city managers (based on their education and experience). Nodding to the presence of measurement error in his constructs, Wilson concludes: "the theory that the political culture of a community constrains law enforcement styles survives the crude and inadequate statistical tests that available data permit" (p. 276).[16 *]

A number of empirical studies of police organizational style have appeared since 1968. All of them measure police style using arrest rates for some mix of offense types, usually less serious offenses thought to be subject to greater discretion. Most of these studies find that organizational and environmental characteristics play a significant role in shaping police style, though there is little consensus or uniformity about what kinds of explanatory variables are important. Several other studies use arrest rates as a dependent variable but do not treat them as

measures of police style. They are usually referred to more generally as indicators of organizational activity, behavior, or productivity.

Other empirical studies have focused on effectiveness or performance, which is usually measured using objective criteria such as clearance rates or subjective criteria such as citizen evaluations of local police performance (Alpert and Moore 1993; Bayley 1994; Parks 1984).[17] One issue these studies address, in part, is whether bigger police departments are necessarily better, as some critics of American policing have claimed (e.g., Murphy and Plate 1977). Subjective studies of police performance conducted by Elinor Ostrom and her colleagues suggest that bigger is not necessarily better.[18] Cordner's (1989) examination of investigative effectiveness in Maryland found that the region of the state (a proxy for urbanization) was an important predictor, but that crime, workload, and department size were generally insignificant. Davenport (1996) is the only scholar to test a model in which the environment has a direct effect on department performance, and an indirect effect on performance through organization structure. His findings are too numerous to summarize, but the most import predictor of department performance was the complexity of the environment. Probably the most consistent finding is that larger police organizations are not necessarily more effective, and in many cases they are less effective than smaller agencies.

In the past few years, responding to the need for better measures of what police organizations do, researchers began to focus their attention on measuring other facets of police behavior. Using data from a national survey of police organizations, Zhao (1996) was the first researcher to test an empirical model explaining community policing. Zhao divided community policing into external and internal components, measuring and estimating models for each one separately. Zhao's findings span the sections of this chapter, since his findings regarding externally focused change refer to those community policing activities that occur outside the police organization and in the community, while his results for internally focused change consist primarily of administrative reforms. All of these studies construct measures of community policing using various methods, and then try to explain interagency variations in these measures. Probably the most consistent finding in these studies is the important role of region and department size in shaping community policing.[19] Emerging research continues to address the causes and consequences of the adoption of community policing. In chapter 6, Renauer presents a new theory to explain variation across American cities in urban community policing, particularly in those activities related to community-building.

EMPIRICAL STUDIES SEEKING TO EXPLAIN WHAT POLICE ORGANIZATIONS ARE

The topic of this section — explaining what the police are — has received less attention from researchers and theorists than the study of what the police do. The reason, as in organizational studies more generally, is probably that most people are far more interested in how organizations behave and what they produce than in more mundane administrative details like how they are structured. This is especially the case in policing, where the "bottom line" is typically considered to be crime, a subject of endless fascination to the American populace. While reams of paper have been expended by reformers trying to convince police administrators to change the structures and internal operating processes of police organizations, scholarly progress in producing theory and research on these organizational features has been slow. In this section, we trace the development of research on internal variation in police organizations, including structure, policy, and other administrative attributes.

We find ourselves once again returning to Wilson's (1968b) *Varieties of Police Behavior.* Wilson's analysis did not explicitly consider internal organizational attributes as an object of study, but throughout the book he makes references to the structural correlates of police style. Langworthy (1986) considered Wilson's work "the only empirically derived theory of police organization to date." Langworthy (1986, 32) summarized Wilson's implicit linkage between style and structure as follows:

> Watchman police departments were said to emphasize order maintenance, to be hierarchically flat, unspecialized, and decentralized. Legalistic departments were characterized as oriented toward vigorous law enforcement, hierarchically tall, specialized in law enforcement function, and centralized. Service-style departments were described as responsive to requests for aid or action, highly specialized across a broad range of functions, decentralized in operations, and centralized administratively.

Thus, although Wilson's work is best remembered as a theory of police style, it also contains an implicit theory of police organizational structure.

The first empirical studies in this genre didn't appear until the mid-1970s, emerging, like Wilson's work, from political science and urban studies. In 1975, T. A. Henderson published a study on the correlates of professionalism in sheriffs' agencies. The study falls within the class of theory and research that Langworthy (1986) classifies as normative, since defining and measuring police professionalism requires the

researcher to make personal judgments about what it means to be professional.[20] It was the first (and perhaps only) study to treat professionalism as an organizational, rather than an individual, attribute. In 1976, Morgan and Swanson examined a number of organizational attributes. With little regard for theory, the researchers used exploratory factor analysis to construct both their independent and dependent variables.[21] According to the Social Science Citation Index, neither study has been cited very often (7 for Henderson and 1 for Morgan and Swanson), suggesting that the birth of empirical research on the causes and correlates of police organization was rather anonymous.

During the 1970s, Elinor Ostrom and her colleagues collected considerable data on American police organizations. They examined policing as an "industry," focusing on patterns in the production and consumption of police services. In a number of publications, Ostrom, Parks, and Whitaker (see 1978a) described and explained how police organizations in metropolitan areas rely on one another for mutual support and to provide various specialized services. Their work defied critics who argued that American policing was a loosely connected patchwork of small and untrained police agencies, often consisting of only a handful of officers (Murphy and Plate 1977; Skoler and Hetler 1970). While the work of Ostrom and her colleagues made enormous contributions to the study of policing in general, the unit of analysis in nearly all of their publications was the metropolitan area and its patterns of service production and consumption, not police organizations.[22] For that reason, most of their work falls outside the scope of this chapter. Their focus on the internal consequences of police organizational size, however, was one of the earliest studies seeking to explain variations in police organizational structure (Ostrom et al. 1978b).

Probably the most influential work in this area is Robert Langworthy's 1986 book, *The Structure of Police Organizations*. Langworthy argued convincingly that with the exception of James Q. Wilson's work, scholarly attention to police *organizations* had been restricted to normative theories and prescriptions about how they *should* be structured and what they *should* be doing. This tendency to focus on prescription rather than description and explanation, on what police *should* be doing rather than what they *are* doing and why they are doing it, left a large empirical gap in our understanding of police organizations.[23] As a first step toward filling this gap, Langworthy borrowed a series of propositions from organization theory (and once again from Wilson's work), constructing his own unique theory to explain variation in the structure of police organizations. Using data from two national surveys (including data from Ostrom and her colleagues and the Kansas City General Administrative Survey), Langworthy then tested his theory empirically. His analysis was the first comprehensive comparative empirical study to treat the structure of police organizations as a dependent variable. He concluded that the causal forces in his study did not appear to exert a significant constraint on organization structure (136):

> It seems plain that the explanations, size, technology, population mobility, population complexity, and type of local government, although theoretically significant determinants or correlates of agency structure, explain very little of the variance in agency structure. The constraints, when they are suggested by the data, do not appear insurmountable.

These findings suggest that American police executives are, by and large, free to design police organizations as they see fit.

Research studies on the causes and correlates of police organizational structure continue to emerge. Crank and Wells (1991) found that size exerts a nonlinear effect on structure. King (1999) found that older police organizations employ fewer civilians that younger ones. Davenport (1996) found that violent crime, resource capacity, and environmental turbulence have mixed effects on measures of structure. Maguire's (2003) replication and extension of Langworthy's study found a series of mixed effects of age, size, technology, and environment on structure. Maguire divided the structure of police organizations into two domains: (1) structural complexity, and (2) structural coordination and control mechanisms. Structural complexity is the extent to which the organization divides itself into vertical or hierarchical levels (such as different levels of command), functional divisions (such as special units or teams), and spatial divisions (such as different precincts). Those organizations with many vertical, functional, and spatial divisions are more complex. Structural coordination and control mechanisms are elements that are built into the structure of the organization to help managers and administrators maintain coordination and control. Maguire considered three such mechanisms: the use of administrative staffs, formal written policies, and centralization of command. Maguire found strong evidence that the context of police organizations exerts constraints on structural complexity (vertical, functional, and spatial divisions), but not on structural coordination and control (administration, formalization, and centralization). Overall, the study of police organizational structure has entered a stage of incremental development.

Other studies in this genre examined the environmental and organizational correlates of police innovation and various internal (adminis-

tratively oriented) community policing reforms. Based on the literature on "innovation diffusion," Weiss (1997) examines two questions: do police organizations rely on informal communications with other agencies (peer emulation), and if so, do these contacts result in the diffusion of innovation across agencies? Diffusion of innovation is the general notion that innovative practices, whether new vaccines to cure the sick or new managerial practices in policing, tend to spread in predictable ways. Weiss found that agencies do engage in informal information sharing, and that peer emulation and cosmopolitanism both shape the adoption of innovations. King (1998) also examines the sources of innovation in police agencies, but his research is rooted more in traditional organizational theory than the diffusion literature. King found that innovation is a multidimensional concept consisting of at least five separate dimensions: radical, administrative, technical, line-technical, and programmatic. Furthermore, he found additional evidence that at least some of these dimensions can be further reduced into multiple subdimensions. The findings are too numerous to summarize here, but overall, organizational factors played a stronger role in shaping innovativeness than environmental or "ascriptive" factors.

Several studies have examined just one category of innovativeness: the various kinds of administrative changes occurring under the banner of community policing. Zhao (1996) was the first researcher to examine the causes of "internally-focused" changes occurring under community policing. He constructed a measure of internal change and then sought to explain variation in the measure using a number of organizational and environmental predictors. His models were able to explain more of the variation in externally focused change than in internally focused change. In their evaluation of the Justice Department's COPS Office, Roth and Johnson (1997) found that while federal funding may have affected external elements of community policing, agencies receiving the funding were not more likely than nonfundees to have made internal organizational changes. Finally, in a study focusing on measurement rather than explanation, Maguire and Uchida (2000) developed reliable measures of internal change which they referred to as "adaptation." Although region and department size were only included in the model as predictors for statistical reasons, once again, both were found to exert a significant effect on adaptation.

Explaining what the police are — their policies, structures, programs, and other elements — represents the next frontier of research on police organizations. The research in this area is relatively undeveloped and there is an untapped pool of theories to test. For instance, promising theories that were developed in the 1960s have still not been fully tested. These include the work of Reiss and Bordua (1967) and a number of propositions about police agency structure implicit in Wilson's (1968b) theory of police behavior (Langworthy 1986). In addition, there have been a number of recent theoretical contributions in the areas of contingency theory (Maguire 2003), institutional theory (Crank 1994; Crank and Langworthy 1992; Katz 1997; Mastrofski and Uchida 1993), resource dependency theory, and various combinations of these theories (Maguire, Zhao, and Lovrich 1999; Mastrofski and Ritti 2000). Below, we describe these theories and their promise for helping us to understand police organizations.

WHAT FACTORS SHAPE POLICE ORGANIZATIONS?

Many of the same variables are used to explain interagency variation in both what police organizations do and what they are. One reason for this is undoubtedly the availability of these measures in common sources such as Census Bureau publications and data or the Municipal Yearbook. Another reason is that many of the same theories are used to explain differences across police agencies.

If we were to isolate the factors that shape police organizations with any degree of certainty and rigor, we would require a full-length book to do so. The studies listed by Maguire and Uchida (2000) contain at least eighty-five separate independent variables, even after combining those that are similar but not exactly the same (two different measures of political culture, for instance). The following list contains the fourteen measures that had at least one statistically significant effect in at least three separate studies. They are sorted in descending order by the number of studies in which they demonstrated a significant effect:

- Organizational Size (18)
- City Governance (5)
- Region (5)
- Concentration (4)
- Crime Patterns (4)
- Organizational Age (4)
- Political Culture (4)
- Population Size (4)
- Population Heterogeneity (4)
- Poverty/Income (3)
- Urbanization or Ruralization (4)
- Span of Control or Supervisory Ratio (3)
- Time (3)
- Vertical Differentiation (3)

We are careful not to make too much of these findings. This list is intended to simply illustrate the kinds of variables that researchers have used to explain differences in police organizations, and those that have been found important. These findings pertain to several different dependent variables, and neither the direction of effects nor the quality of the studies is considered. Nevertheless, this list illustrates some of the factors commonly thought and found to influence police organizations.

The most frequent and consistent finding in organizational research on police is the importance of organization size. The effects of size are not universal, as Ostrom and her colleagues have repeatedly demonstrated; the research suggests that size has an important effect on style, structure, and processes, but not necessarily on effectiveness and efficiency. Region also continues to exert significant effects on the administration of public organizations. Yet, to date, researchers have not done a very good job in isolating the theoretical reasons for these effects, though many possibilities have been suggested (Maguire et al. 1997). The structure of city governance, together with local political culture, also exerts significant effects on police organizations, suggesting that any comprehensive theory of police organizations needs to account for political effects. Another particularly noteworthy finding is the presence of two variables suggesting a historical effect on police organizations: the department's age and the passage of time. Police organizations constantly change. The appearance of time and age in this list suggests that they change in ways that are sometimes predictable. Thus, any comprehensive theory of police organizations needs to account for historical effects. The remaining variables are all elements of the organization or its environment, and most are represented in traditional organizational theories.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

The scholarly study of police organizations has not evolved in a progressive, orderly fashion. Much of the research contains methodological and theoretical shortcomings, and for that reason it has been of limited utility for understanding police organizations and the forces that shape them. A byproduct of this limitation is that this research has been of little practical use for police executives and policy makers. More than two decades ago, Dorothy Guyot (1977) bemoaned the lack of empirical research on police organizations, citing Wilson's *Varieties of Police Behavior* as the lone exception. Nearly a decade later, Robert Langworthy (1986, 32) echoed Guyot's complaints, arguing that Wilson's work "remains the only empirically derived theory of police organization to

date." Through the mid-1980s, police organizational scholarship had not substantially evolved beyond Wilson's seminal work.

Langworthy's *The Structure of Police Organizations* was an important turning point in police organizational scholarship. It is among a handful of studies that have blended theory and research in an effort to further our understanding about the structure and function of American police organizations. Perhaps even more importantly, it inspired a new generation of police organizational scholarship (Crank and Wells 1991; King 1999; King, Travis, and Langworthy 1997; Maguire 1997, 2003).

Thus, we cannot complain as forcefully as our predecessors about the status of the scholarship regarding police organizations. Since the mid-1990s, there have been a number of improvements in theory, data, and method, though certainly much remains to be done. This section has two simultaneous goals: to diagnose some of the weaknesses in this line of research, and to suggest some ways that researchers might continue to breathe into it some new life. We will consider three primary areas: theory, research, and policy.

Theory

Throughout this chapter we have made reference to theories used by scholars to explain interagency variation in police organizations. Some of these theories have received empirical support, others have not, and others remain untested. This section briefly reviews the state of theoretical explanation in the study of American police organizations.

We begin by restating contingency theory, since it is an inclusive theory of structure, process, and performance. Briefly stated, contingency theory holds that organizations will only be effective if they remain dynamic, adapting to changes in technology and environment. Technology here is used in the broadest sense, referring to the tools and strategies used by the organization to process raw materials. Thus, in addition to the material technologies that are having such a profound influence in policing (Ericson and Haggerty 1997; Manning 1992), it also includes the social technologies used by the police to process and change people and communities (Maguire 2003; Mastrofski and Ritti 2000). Contingency theory focuses predominantly on the "task environment" — those elements of the environment with direct relevance for the work of the organization. In policing, the task environment would include citizens, courts and other parts of the criminal justice system, patterns of crime and criminality, the sources available for recruiting and training officers, the physical and social attributes of the

community, and numerous other external forces that shape the structure and function of police agencies.

Contingency theory is the foundation of nearly every study of police organizations. It is the implicit source of most of the explanatory variables used in models explaining organizational features: size, technology, and the various elements of the environment. It assumes that effective organizations are rational entities seeking to maximize their levels of effectiveness and efficiency. It also assumes that organizations failing to adapt to changes in technology and environment will be ineffective, fail, and be replaced by others (Langworthy 1992).[24] This inherent rationality is why many organizational scholars have abandoned contingency theory (Donaldson 1995). Most of the people who study police organizations would probably not describe them as rational, dynamic, or adaptive. The failure of contingency theory to effectively explain the structure and function of organizations has led to the development of numerous other theories. We now discuss three alternative perspectives on the role of organizational environments: as sources of legitimacy, resources, and information.

Institutional theory has its roots in the early study of organizations by such influential theorists as Talcott Parsons and Philip Selznick. For example, Selznick described institutionalization as the process by which organizations develop an "organic character" (Perrow 1986) and become "infused with value beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand" (Selznick 1957, 17). Selznick was fascinated by the paradox that organizations are created for rational action, but that they never quite succeed in conquering irrationality. Institutional theory has experienced a revival since the mid-1980s, a trend that many attribute to an influential article by Meyer and Rowan in 1977. Meyer and Rowan argued that the environment is not just a source of raw materials, clients, technologies, and other technical elements essential to the function of an organization. Environments are also the source of such intangible elements as standards, norms, rumors, myths, symbols, knowledge, ceremonies, and traditions. These elements constitute the institutional environment, and though they are often less rational than elements in the technical environment, they are nonetheless essential sources of organizational legitimacy. Since organizations require legitimacy to survive and prosper, they are often more responsive to institutional concerns than they are to technical concerns. Institutional theory has begun to occupy an increasingly important role in the study of police organizations (Crank 1994; Crank and Langworthy 1992, 1996; Maguire 2003; Maguire and Mastrofski 2000; Maguire, Zhao, and Lovrich 1999; Mastrofski 1998; Mastrofski and Ritti 1996; Mastrofski, Ritti, and

Hoffmaster 1987). Enough has been written about institutional theory now, that finding ways to test it in policing is an important next step.

While institutional theory is based on the role of the environment as a source of legitimacy, credentialing, and support for the organization, resource dependency theory focuses on the environment as a source of valuable resources. The principal statement of resource dependency theory is Pfeffer and Salancik's (1978) *External Control of Organizations*. Resource dependency theory is essentially a theory of power and politics that focuses on the methods used by organizational actors to secure the flow of resources. Because organizations are frequently dependent on securing resources from the environment, they are to a certain point "externally controlled." Resource dependency theory has not yet been applied to policing in a comprehensive way, though two recent papers have described its relevance to police organizations (Katz, Maguire, and Roncek 2002; Maguire and Mastrofski 1999).

While the first two theories focus on the environment as a locus of resources, the third sees it as a source of information. Weick (1969) and Duncan (1972) have both demonstrated how various sectors of the environment contain "pools" of information that are critical to the organization, which then processes this information in such a way as to decrease "information uncertainty." As the pace of computerization in police agencies continues to grow, the role of information may become even more relevant. Two discussions have focused on the centrality of information to police organizations. Manning (1992) outlines the link between organizations, environments and information-processing technologies such as computer aided dispatch (CAD) systems, centralized call collection (911) mechanisms, "expert" systems, management information systems, and other tools designed to increase the organization's capacity to intake and process information. Manning concludes by suggesting that information technologies have "an indeterminate effect on the organizational structure of policing; technology is used to produce and reproduce traditional practices, yet is slowly modifying them" (1992, 391). Ericson and Haggerty (1997) explore similar themes in *Policing the Risk Society*. They view police organizations as part of a larger network of institutions responsible for the identification, management, and communication of risks. They argue that policing (at multiple levels) is shaped by external institutions and their need for information about risks. Theories of the environment as a source of information are not very well developed at this point. In addition, they contain a host of ambiguities about the proper unit of analysis.[25] Nonetheless, given the emergence in policing of sophisticated technologies

for collecting and processing information, this perspective deserves further attention.

While all of these theories offer substantial promise for understanding police organizations, we cannot ignore classical explanations. Stinchcombe (1963) made a series of early propositions in which the distribution of public and private spaces within communities serve as important sources of variation in police practice administration. His work foreshadowed the emergence of large private spaces policed by private entities, such as malls, amusement parks, and gated communities. Other classic theoretical statements appearing in the 1960s (Bordua and Reiss 1966; Reiss and Bordua 1967; Wilson 1963, 1968b) have still not been adequately tested. These classics need to be dusted off and revived.

Many of the studies reviewed earlier in this chapter have not been adequately rooted in theory. In diagnosing the current state of police organizational scholarship in the United States, we find little reason for concern about the nature or volume of theories upon which to base solid empirical research. One area for improvement that should be explored is how a good theory of police organization might differ from a theory of organizations in general, or of public service organizations in particular. There is already some evidence that theories designed to explain private organizations, especially those in manufacturing rather than service industries, are inadequate to explain police organizations (Maguire 2003). The answer may exist in either the artful blending of existing theories, or the emergence of new and better ideas.

RESEARCH

Data Collection

Data collection in policing is currently in an exciting and rapid state of development. Much of this can probably be attributed to the emergence of new technologies for recording, collecting, processing, and distributing data. Police organizations are now experimenting with technology at a record pace, implementing or updating their management information systems, computer-aided dispatch centers, geomapping and other modern forms of crime analysis, mobile data terminals in patrol cars, and many other advances emerging in the past decade. One consequence of the proliferation of information-processing technologies is that police agencies now contain vast archives of data. While much of this data is not very useful for national comparative research, it is changing the face of policing in important ways.

National data collection on police organizations is not in a state of crisis. Police agencies are now more open than ever. Careful surveys conducted by researchers, government agencies, and survey firms routinely obtain response rates of 70 to 90 percent. There are numerous sources of data, and although most could be improved, they are, on average, of decent quality. We have criticized some of the data inventories used by government agencies for counting the number of police agencies and officers in the United States over the past several decades (Maguire et al. 1998). Many of the problems cited in that article have been rectified, though some remain. Consequently, current efforts to enumerate the American police are more accurate than ever. Finally, several agencies within the Justice Department now routinely include in their police agency databases a unique agency code, thus enabling researchers and policy makers to link separate databases and test interesting new hypotheses. While there is always room for improvement in the kinds of data that are collected, the methods used to collect data from police organizations tend, on average, to be fairly good.

Our optimism here is not meant to suggest that there remain no challenges. For instance, in response to the 1994 Crime Act, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) have undertaken efforts to measure the use of force by police agencies throughout the nation. BJS has added supplemental questions on police use of force to its national household survey. While this strategy is useful for some purposes, it undercounts at least three classes of people who may be more likely to have force used against them by the police: the homeless, the incarcerated and institutionalized, and those without telephones.[26] A second strategy, undertaken by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) with funding from BJS and NIJ, attempted to develop a national Police Use of Force Database based on confidential reporting by police departments of use-of-force incidents. This method, too, contains a number of problems. Most importantly, it relies on official records that may reflect as much about the organization's willingness to record use-of-force incidents as the actual number of incidents that take place. Other agencies, including the Police Complaint Center and the American Civil Liberties Union, collect data on excessive force and patterns of discrimination from citizens alleging to be victims of these offenses. While these may serve a useful social purpose, neither attempts to (nor claims to) carefully enumerate use-of-force incidents nationally.

Police agencies face new challenges with regard to "racial profiling" data: collecting detailed information on the characteristics of those who are stopped and the reasons for conducting searches. This enterprise is fraught with the potential for error (and possibly subversion) and will be very difficult to implement nationally. The demand for these kinds of

measures reflects a point we raised throughout the chapter — policing doesn't have one bottom-line — it has many. The demand for these new data collection efforts reflects a concern for something other than the war on crime and drugs. It reflects a growing concern for equity and fairness on the part of the police. Once again, data collection will play a central, if challenging, role.

Explanation

The methodologies used in the comparative study of police organizations have improved over the past three decades. Yet, many of the studies we examined are flawed in both theory and method. If we had to identify the single most serious problem in the entire line of research, our choice would undoubtedly be the failure to consistently root empirical studies in theory. Some of the studies with the worst methodological flaws contained flawless reviews of the relevant literature and theory. The indiscriminate use of statistical methods without proper attention to theory is common in much of the research. Judging from this literature alone, it appears that a crucial point in the research process that many people either ignore or find difficult is the translation of a theoretical model into an empirical one. Our goal here is not to denigrate past researchers, but to point out some of the flaws in the research in the hope of steering future researchers away from making the same mistakes.

A Modest Vision for Future Research

Sometimes it seems that empirical research on police organizations is a lot like making minestrone soup: in the absence of a good recipe (theory), find whatever vegetables that happen to be convenient (the data), toss them into the pot (the model), cook it (execute the statistical program), and see if it tastes good (check the statistical results). Continue to make adjustments (capitalizing on statistical chance) to the soup until you like the way it tastes.

Our vision for the future of police organizational research is rather simple. Begin by explicating a reasonable theory, spend a considerable amount of time translating the theory into an empirical model, collect reasonably good data that are useful for testing the theory, spend some additional time turning those raw data points into theoretically meaningful and reliable measures, and then test a model that posits some type of causal order among the measures. Don't capitalize on statistical chance by endlessly tinkering with the model if it doesn't fit. If this is the case, return to step 1 and modify the theory. Recent advances

in statistical modeling techniques and the software packages in which these techniques are implemented make it easy for most social scientists to become skilled and careful theory testers. This is our "recipe" for achieving incremental progress in the study of police organizations.

Policy

Police executives and policy makers are concerned with the day-to-day realities of their worlds. They want measures that assist them in making decisions and policy. They want explanations for why things occurred. In the academic world of theories and data, researchers want precision and statistically significant findings. They want analysis driven by theory. Coming to grips with both of these worlds is difficult but not insurmountable. The policy implications that derive from theory and analysis need to be made explicit by researchers. Our experience suggests that police executives and policy makers want good measures and explanations, but they want them in ways that are much more understandable. They want direct answers to questions about "How does my department compare to others in terms of community policing or officer performance? If there are differences, how can we overcome them?" As researchers, at least one of our jobs is to assist policy makers in answering these types of questions. Balancing all of these competing interests — using adequate theory, collecting good data, formulating accurate measures, developing sound explanations, and isolating the implications for policy — is no small task. Pulling them all together is a worthwhile challenge.

CONCLUSION

This chapter is meant to serve as an introduction to research and theory on the comparative study of American police organizations. Police organizations differ, and understanding those differences is an important area of focus for both research and theory. We have tried to escort readers on a journey from the early research on why police organizations vary and the birth of scholarly theories meant to explain these variations, to the more sophisticated research that is now taking place. Along the way there have been many pitfalls: insufficient attention to conceptualization and theory, unrealistic measures, inadequate statistical methods, and an overall lack of appreciation for previous research. While looking back upon the classics in the field provides a sense of foundation, with perhaps a touch of nostalgia, there remain countless avenues for refinement and rediscovery. Chief among these are two responsibilities that may seem at first glance like strange bedfellows:

doing research that (1) is based firmly in existing or new theories, and (2) contributes to the understanding or practice of policing. By tracing the evolution of research on police organizations from past to present, bumps and all, we hope this chapter provides a clear road map for what is to come. As we progress through the twenty-first century, much remains to be learned.

NOTES

1. Portions of this chapter appeared in Maguire and Uchida (2000).
2. This research also grew out of the political science tradition of exploring variations in local government policies and structures (Meyer and Baker 1979; Wilson 1968a, 1968b).
3. Several different levels of analysis are commonly used within organization studies. The level of analysis used in this chapter is called the "organization set," which "views the environment from the perspective or standpoint of a specific (focal) organization" (Scott 1992, 126). This is an important detail because it limits the scope of the chapter to a particular analytical framework. Many studies of police organizations are implicitly based on a different level of analysis. For instance, Ostrom, Parks, and Whitaker (1978a) used an "areal organization field," while Bayley (1985, 1992) used the "organizational population" (Scott 1992).
4. This definition purposely excludes agencies that are specialized by function (e.g., fish and wildlife police) or territory (park or airport police), including most federal law enforcement agencies, many county sheriffs and state highway patrol agencies, and private security firms. While using such a restrictive definition reduces the overall level of variation across the organizations under study, it defines a common set of core tasks and functions.
5. There are also numerous similarities among police organizations. As Wadman (1998) points out, all of the largest municipal police agencies have hierarchical rank structures (though some may be flatter than others), they all have divisions for patrol, investigations, and administration, and they all devote a disproportionate share of their resources to motorized patrol. Wadman overstates the similarities between police agencies, but his point is well-taken. There is variation among police agencies, but it is variation "within a theme." We are grateful to Graeme Newman for this observation.
6. Although there is some overlap, the style of a police organization is conceptually different from the style of an individual officer (Talarico and Swanson 1979; Wilson 1968b).
7. We are careful to distinguish what an organization does from what it is by the location of the activity, behavior, or program, rather than its degree of visibility to the public. Much of what the police do *externally*, as Goldstein (1960) has argued, occurs in low visibility settings. On the other hand, Marshall Meyer (1979) and other organizational theorists have shown how *internal* features of organizations (such as their structures) are sometimes designed to serve as visible signals to external constituents that the organization is doing the right things.
8. Most serious organizational scholars would probably agree that much of what goes on in organizations is random or unexplainable. Weick (1976) suggests that explaining the regularities across organizations is less interesting than explaining this seeming randomness. He suggests using alternative methods that enable researchers to understand the "loose coupling" or unexplained variance in organizational relationships.
9. A similar issue arises in mortality studies. Studying only the dead to learn about causes and correlates of death is a flawed strategy because we cannot know whether these same conditions are present in people who lived (Kaufman 1976; King, Travis, and Langworthy 1997).
10. Bordua and Reiss (1966) explore these same themes (to a lesser extent) in an earlier article.
11. For example, Reiss and Bordua (1967) discussed two environmental variables that are important to the organization: the security of the police chief's tenure and the degree of accountability that the government executive demands from the chief. Cross-classifying these two variables, they formed a crude taxonomy of four department types that might reflect variation in political interference into police department affairs. They suggested that these and other environmental variables were important because they "structure the effective range of command and control" (p. 49) in municipal police departments.
12. Slovak (1986) laments that "there is a very real sense in which the promise offered by Wilson's original analysis has gone unfulfilled" (p. 5).
13. Aggregate-level arrest rates for various offenses are frequently used as an indicator of police style. Note that these studies focus on organizational style (or some other aggregate), not the style of an individual officer (Slovak 1986).
14. In general, structural contingency theory suggests that no single organizational form is ideal for all circumstances (Donaldson 1995; Lawrence and Lorsch 1967). Successful organizations survive by adapting to the contingencies of their specific tasks and environments.
15. This is not meant to imply that police organizations have no effect on crime, because crime is the product of numerous social forces, including the police and other institutions. Therefore it is awkward to think of the volume of crime within a community as an organizational measure that describes the police. For a recent review of the available research evidence in this area, see Eck and Maguire (2000).
16. Reprinted by permission of the publisher from *Varieties of Police Behavior: The Management of Law and Order in Eight Communities* by James

Q. Wilson, p. 276, Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, copyright © 1968, 1978 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College.

17. We have chosen not to examine studies that use measures of organizational properties (such as performance) that are aggregated based on individuals' subjective impressions or opinions. For instance, if we ask one thousand citizens in each of ten cities to rate their local police, and then compute a summary measure of citizen ratings for each agency, we would be forming an aggregate subjective measure. Such measures are not considered here, though they are clearly important.

18. Ostrom and Parks (1973), for instance, found curvilinear relationships between city size and citizen ratings of police performance in their secondary analysis of data from 102 cities. For central cities, performance ratings increased as city size approached 100,000 residents, after which ratings decreased; the same curvilinear relationship was found for suburbs, but the population threshold was only 20,000 residents. Whitaker (1983) also concludes that the size of the police organization is more important than the size of the political jurisdiction, thus lending support to reform strategies that seek to simulate the feel of small-town policing in large cities through the use of precinct stations, substations, and other decentralization and spatial differentiation strategies. Whitaker's (1983) chapter contains the most comprehensive (though dated) review of the effect of department size on police organizations.

19. There is a shortage of theory to explain either of these consistent findings. Region may simply be a proxy for any number of political, historical, economic, or demographic differences between regions. Organizational size seems to affect nearly every aspect of what organizations do. One possible reason that larger police agencies may report engaging in more community policing activities is simply that they have more employees to assign to such functions.

20. This point is controversial. Some might argue that measuring any concept involves normative judgments. Our view is that the concept of professionalism is inherently normative because it implies a rank-ordering and a value judgment: more professionalized organizations are better than those that are less professionalized.

21. Exploratory factor analysis is a method used by researchers to combine multiple variables into a single measure. Like any other tool, it can be, and is often, abused. One way that it can be used in an atheoretical manner is to combine variables that are seemingly unrelated into a single measure for statistical rather than theoretical or conceptual reasons.

22. Clark, Hall, and Hutchinson (1967) treat interorganizational relationships as "contextual" variables rather than organizational variables in their study of police performance.

23. According to Duffee (1990), this problem is rampant in all sectors of criminal justice. His advice to criminal justice scholars is particularly appropriate — we should focus on describing and explaining what criminal justice organizations *do*, rather than what they *should be doing.*

24. Conventional wisdom in policing is that police organizations do not "go out of business" (Travis and Brann 1997). Recent work by William King and his colleagues (King 1999b; King, Travis, and Langworthy 1997) challenges this assumption. Based on a survey of county sheriffs in Ohio, King documented the death of 104 police agencies (and the birth of an additional 15). King is now replicating this study in several other states.

25. Weick's (1969) discussion is inherently social psychological, while Manning (1992) and Ericson and Haggerty (1997) span levels from the individual to the institution.

26. We are grateful to Paula Kautt for this observation.

Criminal Justice Theory

Explaining the Nature and Behavior of Criminal Justice

David E. Duffee
Edward R. Maguire

Editors

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