The London School of Economics and Political Science

From personal experience to moral identification: The roots of trust, confidence and police legitimacy

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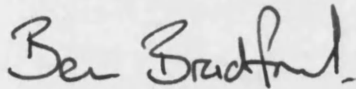

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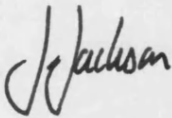

Dr. Jonathan Jackson

FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE TO MORAL IDENTIFICATION: THE ROOTS OF TRUST, CONFIDENCE AND POLICE LEGITIMACY

ABSTRACT

Contacts between police and public form here the starting point for an investigation into trust, confidence and legitimacy in relation to the British police. The ways in which people 'read' and judge encounters with the police, the messages they take from them, and implications for trust and legitimacy are key empirical concerns. The procedural justice model developed by Tom Tyler and colleagues constitutes the key theoretical reference point. This theory suggests that in their dealings with legal authorities people value fairness, respect and openness over instrumental concerns, and that procedural fairness is linked to enhanced trust, legitimacy and cooperation. The social-psychological insights of the procedural justice model are combined with more sociologically oriented accounts of the nature of policing in 'late-modern' Britain. The five papers presented demonstrate, first, that the influence of contact experiences on public confidence in the police has grown over time, just as the salience of other factors has declined. Second, personal experience affects important aspects or components of trust; judgements about police effectiveness, fairness and engagement with the community. Third, individuals do appear to value procedural fairness over instrumental outcomes, and fair treatment is linked with both higher confidence and a greater propensity to accept police decisions. Fourth, wider concerns may be as important as personal experience. The social and cultural position of the British police – what it represents – is a key factor in trust judgements. Finally, police legitimacy is implicated in basic psychological needs to maintain and reproduce order, suggesting that it is to an extent prior to any active assessments of the police organisation. In sum, contact matters, and it is judged in ways congruent with procedural justice theory. But assessments of the effect of contact on confidence must be placed within a broader understanding of the social and cultural meaning of the police.

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PREFACE

The material presented here constitutes my PhD submission to the London School of Economics. The thesis differs from the usual format because the Methodology Institute uses the 'papers' model in its PhD programme. The structure of the submission is therefore as follows. The initial chapter provides the theoretical, empirical and policy context before going into to outline the overall aims of the research. This is followed by a conceptual review which introduces the key ideas and theories. A brief linking chapter outlines the five papers that follow and constitute the core of the submission. The empirical papers are separated by short 'interludes' which aim to strengthen narrative continuity. The final chapter sums up what has preceded and attempts to draw out the main lessons and findings from this work.

This format inevitably entails some repetition, for example of key theoretical concepts in the 'conceptual review' and in individual papers. In general I have tried to keep this to a minimum – however, in some instances, a small amount of repetition is perhaps beneficial to the overall flow. Also, a word on referencing: the five substantive papers of the submission are referenced separately, as they were (or will) be in the relevant journals. All other references are placed at the very end of the text.

Of the three joint-authored papers presented here I contributed 66 per cent of the work to the first ('Contact and confidence'); 40 per cent to the second ('Crime, policing and social order') and 75 per cent to the third ('Public cooperation with the police'). All the rest of the material is my own, as are any mistakes in any part of the submission.

I would like to thank a number of people who have helped me over the last three years. First and foremost Jon Jackson, my supervisor, without whom none of this would have been possible. Secondly, I am grateful to the staff and students at the Methodology Institute, who have been a great source of ideas and assistance. Betsy Stanko from the London Metropolitan Police deserves a special mention, both in terms of the help she has given me personally and the access she has provided to the MPS data. Finally, I could not have done any of this without my family, and Roberta, to whom I can't say sorry enough.

Ben Bradford, February 2010

INTRODUCTION

Public support for the police is an issue of central importance for the criminal justice system specifically and for government, state and the provision of security more widely – and also, therefore, for social scientific inquiry into these subjects. The criminal justice system and particularly its gatekeeper, the uniformed police, rely on the trust and cooperation of the public in order to function effectively (Tyler 1990; Reiner 2000; Tyler and Huo 2002; Hough 2007a). The legitimacy of the police among the policed, which as the work of Tyler and others has shown is closely bound up with trust, confidence and support, is vital for policing if it is to be effective.

But public trust and confidence and the legitimacy of the police are important on more than a functional basis. The police are one of the primary agents, indeed primary representatives, of the state, and in democratic plural societies people have a right to be both free from unnecessary or abusive state interventions and to feel that the state represents them and defends their interests. Moral and legal philosophers have long recognised that police, criminal justice and other state agencies should not simply ensure order and security, but also treat people fairly and decently and be aligned with the normative expectations of those they govern. Fairness is of course one of the keystones of justice itself (Rawls 1999) but equally important is the idea that citizens should not be at risk of humiliation from, and be treated with dignity by, their government (Margalit 1996). Furthermore, the legitimacy held to underpin the police institution and promote cooperation with the police organisation contains an irreducible moral or normative core which aligns institution and citizen (Beetham 1991).

These issues underpin the central place of 'trust and confidence' in current policy and academic discussion. The police need the trust and support of the public in order to 'serve and protect' them effectively – but the public also has the right to receive the type of policing it desires, provided in ways which are morally, legally and ethically valid. These concerns are intimately related in ways which may create virtuous or vicious spirals. A police force which is accountable to the public, which focuses on the issues people find important, and which adequately fulfils its given remit is more likely to receive the support needed for many of its duties. A police force perceived otherwise may find public support withdrawn, making its task ever more difficult.

This thesis will examine how such relationships may come into being. Investigation of a key moment in police-public interaction – face to face encounters – will provide an initial heuristic device through which trust, confidence and police legitimacy can be viewed and understood. Discussion will then broaden out to consider how opinions of the police are embedded within wider sets of beliefs and practises.

While not the only crucible in which ideas about institutions such as the police are formed, moments of personal contact are vital in people's experiences of them. Media representations and vicarious experience – the tales told and stories exchanged within family and friendship groups – may be of equal importance in the long run, but few will have the immediacy and, arguably, potential impact of face to face encounters, the more so because contacts will often occur at times of stress, difficulty and drama for those involved. The studies presented here draw on a variety of theoretical perspectives in order to explore the relationships between contact and confidence, but the procedural justice model developed by Tyler and colleagues in the United States (Thibaut and Walker 1975; Lind and Tyler 1988; Tyler 1990; Tyler and Huo 2002; Tyler 2006) will provide the most important conceptual and theoretical tool. This model holds that in their dealings with authorities such as the police people value fair, decent and honourable treatment above instrumental or other concerns, and that the experience of such treatment will enhance the legitimacy of the authority involved.

Yet, the procedural justice model goes much further than this apparently rather straightforward relationship. At its core lies the idea that through fair and decent treatment authorities such as the police demonstrate to those subject to them both shared-group membership and value alignment. That is, if police officers treat people in a procedurally just way they not only communicate that both are 'on the same side', they also express through their actions that both parties share the same (or at least similar) value systems and moral outlooks. The police, as 'prototypical group representatives' (Sunshine and Tyler 2003b) communicate to people powerful messages about the normative and moral order under which they live; notions of the police are therefore deeply implicated in understandings and assessments of that order. The ramifications of procedural justice spread far beyond the actual point of contact to encompass ideas about what policing represents, as both an institution and a set of practises, about where it sits in the wider social and moral order, and about people's orientations to these wider structures as

individuals and as members of social groups. Any understanding of public opinions of the police must therefore move beyond specific moments (and judgements) of contact to consider the people's positions within, and orientation toward, society as a whole.

An initial comment about the concepts trust, confidence and legitimacy is perhaps needed. They are often used more or less interchangeably, and this is no doubt a practise into which the present discussion will on occasion lapse. However, although clearly connected they are conceptually distinct. Indeed, considerations of trust and legitimacy in the literature have been poorly integrated – they are key concepts in broadly separate, although related, bodies of social theory. Work on trust tends to portray it as pervasive, inherent in and formative of many social situations, whether face to face encounters or the relationships between individuals and organisations, institutions or the state. Beyond this definitions vary widely. From some viewpoints, trust assists in reducing the potentially overwhelming complexity of the social world by 'bracketing out' many possible events, acting as if it was certain they were not going to occur (Luhmann 1979). Others have pointed out that at some level trust, if placed, always assumes that those who are trusted will in certain circumstances place one's interests above their own (Barber 1983). One element running through many definitions is that trust involves putting oneself or one's interests, for whatever reason and in whatever way, at the mercy of others, whether these be individuals, groups or institutions (Tilly 2005). Confidence is often seen as broadly synonymous with or part of trust: where it is defined as separately, it has been seen as a more passive anticipation that things will continue much as they are expected to (Luhmann 1988).

Theories of legitimacy, on the other hand, are often confined to a very specific set of social relationships, those between individuals and institutions – such as the police – or even more overarching structures such as the state. The concept of legitimacy is generally bound up with the right to be recognised, to have remit over a specific area of life (Habermas 1979), and to command and be obeyed (Weber 1978; Tyler 1990). While some have followed a loosely Weberian tradition which sees legitimacy ultimately as a recognition of or orientation toward power, and thus having no inherent connection to individual's normative or moral beliefs (Johnson, Dowd et al. 2006), others maintain that legitimacy must also and always be about *justification*. That is, in as much as legitimacy is granted by an individual to an institution it must contain a normative element, a decision, whether conscious or not, on behalf of the individual that the institution shares a certain moral or ethical position (Beetham 1991). Actor's judgements about the legitimacy of an institution must be based to

some degree on assessments of the congruence between its goals, practises and behaviours and their own.

Both trust and legitimacy are vital as social facts for the maintenance of the police function, as concepts in analyses of police-public encounters, and as core concerns in developing understanding of public *orientations* toward the police. At the level of the individual encounter, trust will influence decisions to summon (or not) the police to a specific situation, and how the actions of officers are read and understood; the perceived legitimacy of the police might impact on readiness to comply with instructions or, again, whether the police are involved as the proper body to deal with a specific issue. When people draw conclusions based on the quality of their encounters they may draw on reservoirs of trust or legitimacy to discount bad experiences, or, conversely, a lack of trust might exacerbate bad experiences and mean good ones are discounted.

Trust and legitimacy, or their opposites, are likely to also exist prior to any direct personal contact with the police (Smith 2007a). For many people, social mechanisms other than personal experience will inculcate a certain level of trust and police legitimacy which may later be 'tested' through direct experience (ibid.). These social mechanisms are often implied by the links drawn between police, nation, state and community (Waddington 1999; Girling, Loader et al. 2000; Reiner 2000; Loader and Mulcahy 2003), associations that can also be seen in the light of Bourdieu's (1977; 1990) concept of *habitus*, or Black's (1998) notion of the imperative to exercise social control. That is, in liberal democracies such as the United Kingdom the existence of and basic legitimacy of the police, the agency empowered to deal with things which ought not to be happening (Bittner 2005), is prior to the individual and constitutes one component of the already existing circumstances into which individuals are born (Marx 1963). As well as being in part a response to basic psychological or social needs to exert social control and maintain order, the existence of a particular type of police is one element (among a host of others) which structures how individuals see the world and the possibilities of affecting change to it.

But the importance of trust and legtimacy ranges beyond normative legal theory and political science. Most pertinently for this thesis, and indeed for police on an operational level, legitimacy in particular implies not just a more or less passive attitude toward an institution but also an active engagement with it. Theorists from Weber to Beetham have stressed that the legitimacy of an authority inheres in part in the actions (or non-actions) of

those it governs. A key component of legitimacy is that actors behave in ways congruent with that legitimacy; or as Beetham (1991) puts it, the expressed consent of the governed is part of legitimacy and not simply something which flows from it. The extent to which the police is held to be legitimate by the policed is therefore intimately bound up in how individuals interact with officers. More prosaically, the procedural justice model insists that if people consider the police to be legitimate they are more likely to defer to police authority, cooperate with and assist the police, and are even more likely to obey the law (Tyler 1990; Tyler and Huo 2002).

The relationship between the individual and the police, and what the police as an organisation and a institution means and represents, is therefore vital. It has often been noted that police comprise both a threat and a promise to the public. Not only the first and most important port of call in times of trouble, with the monopoly on the legitimate use of force the police are also able and willing to intrude forcefully into people's lives. The Janus-faced (Crawford 2007) nature of police-work extends beyond this dichotomy and means that individuals may interact with 'different' police on different occasions, or groups of people may interact with 'different' police at the same time. Experience of a police *service* might be very different to experience of a police *force*. Using the point of contact as the starting point allows relationships to these different police roles to be teased out. Furthermore what the police means, what it represents, will vary from person to person, and this may have significant consequences. If police do symbolize nation, state or community, what is the individual's relationship with these structures? Do the police speak as representatives of the local community, the imagined, and benign, national community (Anderson 1983), or a disinterested, even coercive, state? Such considerations will be important in understanding underlying orientations toward the police, how encounters are experienced, and relationships between the two.

Yet places within and ideas about these wider structures, and subsequent implications for police-community relations, are unlikely to be uniform across the population and over time. Recent work has highlighted the impact of social change, above all the advent of late-, liquid- or post-modernity, on opinions, understandings and experiences of the police (Reiner 1992; Loader 1999; Bauman 2000a; Smith 2007b). Others have accentuated the potentially corrosive role of neo-liberal economics, especially via the application of New Public Management techniques, on the bonds between police and public and on the answerability of the police to real public concerns rather than centrally driven 'targets'

(Hough 2003; 2004; 2007a). This work suggests that opinions and the ways in which they are formed cannot be separated out from much wider themes and, ultimately, the trajectories of modern life itself.

The social-psychological associations between police contact, trust and legitimacy outlined above, while putatively universal, may therefore be empirically located in particular historical and social circumstances, largely those pertaining to modern, mostly western, liberal democracies. Quite different orientations toward the police are possible, and indeed plausibly do exist in a wide variety of other settings. The standing of the police in Latin America, for example, is much lower than in the US or UK (Cao and Zhao 2005). Hinton (2006) outlines convincingly how long histories of non-democratic governance, grossly unequal social systems and endemic corruption have combined with current political exigencies in Brazil and Argentina to make any movement towards more representative, effective and trusted police forces difficult at best. Under such conditions ordinary people see little reason to trust the police or to lend them the support needed to maintain true reform programmes. Similarly police forces in Sub-Saharan Africa, with legacies of colonial rule and equally repressive post-colonial governments (Tankebe 2008), have few of the links with and meanings to the populations they serve imagined above. These and many other examples caution against the development of theories of police-public interactions which do not take into account local historic, social and economic realities.

Returning to the specificities of the UK situation, experiences of the police and their potential effects on trust and confidence are live issues in government and policing policy. There are two related reasons for this. The first is that trust and confidence in the police appears to have been declining since the 1960s, and has certainly done so since the early 1980s (Hough 2007a). Reiner (2000) paints a picture of long term decline from an apogee in the 1950s when "'policing by consent' had been achieved in Britain to the maximal degree it is ever attainable" (Reiner 2000: 49) to the current situation where trust in the police is at best fractured, in many cases contingent, and which in some social groups has collapsed entirely. This view is not uncontested, however. Loader and Mulcahy (2003), for example, note that although survey evidence does suggest a decline in trust and confidence this should not be considered catastrophic, and considerable reservoirs of support remain, for example among the non-metropolitan White middle class. In many respects this debate rests on interpretation of ambivalent survey questions (see Paper 1 below). But what is

certain is that support for the police is indeed significantly lower than it was in the halcyon days described by Reiner (see also Weinberger 1995).

This decline in public trust and confidence is generally seen as worrying: damaging to the police and its ability to its job and reflective of wider changes in society relating to the alienation of people from state, and about which, to paraphrase Bittner (1975), something had better be done. This leads to a second issue. Vitally for the present discussion, current policies are in place to try to halt the decline, from 'reassurance policing' and application of the 'signal crimes' approach (Innes 2004a) to specific activities on the ground conducted by neighbourhood policing teams. These policies are predicated on the idea that increasing the number and quality of police-citizen contacts will arrest and reverse the fall in trust and confidence. More generally, increasing the profile of the police in local communities is a core element of current policy (Casey 2008; Home Office 2008). Police officers have an ethical and a legal duty to treat those with whom they come into contact fairly and decently, but these ideas and policies go much further. They are based on an assumption that improving the ways officers deal with people, and increasing police visibility and responsiveness, can have concrete effects in terms of police-community relations as well as in terms of 'reassurance'.

However there is considerable debate about the extent to which direct experience *can* improve trust and confidence. While there is empirical evidence from some quarters that contact which is found to be satisfactory can have an uplifting effect on trust and confidence (Reisig and Parks 2000; Tyler and Fagan 2008), the magnitude of such effects is usually much smaller than any negative consequences from unsatisfactory contacts. This has lead some to speak of an 'asymmetry' in impacts of contact on confidence (Skogan 2006), with the implication that schemes designed to improve the standing of police by improving the quality of contacts are destined to failure. This would be bad news indeed for a UK policing agenda which is firmly fixed on increasing the presence, visibility and activity of police in local areas, and which explicitly links these to improvements in both trust and confidence and feelings of reassurance (OPSR 2003; Dalgliesh and Myhill 2004; Tuffin, Morris et al. 2006; Quinton and Morris 2008).

Despite the evidence that personal contact with the police is more likely to harm public opinion than enhance it, the focus on reassurance and neighbourhood policing might be seen primarily as a response to what the public say, time and again, they want: more visible

and accessible police and above all 'bobbies on the beat' (FitzGerald, Hough et al. 2002; Roberts and Hough 2005). But it is also a recognition of, and attempt to circumvent, the 'reassurance gap' (Duffy, Wake et al. 2008), the much discussed phenomena that confidence in the police appears to have fallen, or at least bottomed out, at a time when crime rates (as measured by the British Crime Survey – BCS) have been falling in a manner unprecedented since the post-war crime 'boom' began (Jansson 2008). Many causes for the reassurance gap have been offered, from the arrival of New Public Management (NPM) techniques in policing policy (Hough 2003; 2007a) to the suggestion that in judging the police people are less concerned with crime *per se* than with (non-criminal) disorder, anti-social behaviour and other representations of social decay and breakdown (Jackson and Sunshine 2007). Central to many such discussions has been the idea that while crime may be falling people do not *feel* this to be the case. Apparent successes in reducing crime have not resulted in improvements in opinion: reassurance policing is supposed to convince the public that they are indeed safer from crime, and that the police are in some way responsible for this.

Of course, the extent of the police's role in reducing crime is itself open to question, and it has long been acknowledged in the criminological literature that there is very little the police can do about crime as a whole, albeit that specific types of crime may be effectively tackled if enough resources are thrown at them (Bayley 1994; Manning 2003; Reiner 2007; Zimring 2007). So improvements in trust and confidence must come in the face both of public refusals to credit the police with reductions in crime *and* the knowledge that the bulk of any improvements are unlikely to have been down to the police in the first place. Here, current UK policies and criminological understandings converge with a key element of the procedural justice model – that what people want from their contacts with the police are not instrumental outcomes (their stolen goods returned, for example) but fair, decent and respectful treatment, and if they receive this they are likely to come away with an improved opinion of the police. More generally, they want to feel the police understand and respond to their concerns. Such behaviour, unlike the criminal behaviour of others, is in the power of the police to control. Procedural justice therefore holds out the possibility that improving the way police handle their contacts with the public will lead to uplifts in trust and confidence (Tyler 1990; Tyler and Huo 2002; Tyler and Fagan 2008). Maintaining as it does that crime and criminal behaviour are not, at the level of face to face encounters, what is most important in driving opinions of the police, the theory suggests the disconnect between crime rates and confidence can be in essence negated. But the extent to which

contact can improve confidence remains moot, and investigation of this question will be of central importance in what follows.

Until now much UK empirical work on police-public relations has concentrated on particular population groups, the most important being ethnic minorities (Keith 1993; Bowling and Philips 2002), other excluded or marginal groups (Loader 1996; Choongh 1997) – an emphasis in part prompted by the long history of difficult relations between police and some social groups, especially certain ethnic minority communities (Gilroy 1987; Hall 1993 (1978)) – and of course those calling the police for help (Newburn and Merry 1990; Waddington 1993; Ames and Hard 2003). Other studies have looked in-depth at one type of interaction, most notably stop and search (MVA and Miller 2000; Waddington, Stenson et al. 2004; Shiner 2006; Bowling and Philips 2007), a specific type of policing practise or policy (Crawford, Lister et al. 2003) or centred on a particular locale in order to develop rich, context specific understandings (Girling, Loader et al. 2000; Crawford, Lister et al. 2003). In contrast, recent survey reports, while important sources of information, have generally taken a broad-brush approach to personal contacts, leaving many avenues unexplored (FitzGerald, Hough et al. 2002; Allen, Edmonds et al. 2006).

A prime aim of this thesis will be to plug some of the gaps in this literature. In particular, and unlike many criminological approaches, it will take as its reference point the whole population, not just those particularly likely for whatever reason to come into contact with the police, or for whom relationships with the police are particularly important. By doing so it will open up lines of enquiry largely absent from considerations of experiences of the police among those who may be seen as marginalised, disaffected or 'police property'. For example, how can personal contacts be interpreted in light of the well developed literature detailing the intimate relationships between policing, nation, state and belonging (Waddington 1999; Girling, Loader et al. 2000; Reiner 2000; Loader and Mulcahy 2003)? How do the relatively fleeting contacts which constitute the majority of police-public encounters affect support for the police? How are broader concerns about crime, disorder and 'the state of society' (Innes 2004a; 2004b; Jackson and Sunshine 2007) integrated into personal experiences of the police, as well as more abstract opinions? To what extent is wider social change, from desubordination to the growth of consumerism, implicated in the form, content and interpretation of police-public encounters and more general cultural experiences of the police? Finally, what are the repercussions of damage to, or enhancement of, police legitimacy which might arise from personal contact?

Aims of the thesis

This thesis has two main strands. Taking as its starting point the idea that personal experience is one of the key moments in the formation of ideas about the police, it will ask: what are the current patterns of contact with the police and how have these changed over time; how are such contacts judged by the public; and what are the implications for trust, confidence and legitimacy, including in terms of the potential results of enhancements or harms to legitimacy? Running through all three questions will be the recurring theme of police representivity – what, if any, broader social institutions or structures do the police represent, and what are the implications in terms of individuals interactions with officers? The second strand will pick up on these issues to address in more general terms what police might *mean* for people; what are the structures of feeling within which the police are embedded (Williams 1964; c.f. Loader and Mulcahy 2003), or, perhaps, what exactly is the group in 'proto-typical group representative' (Sunshine and Tyler 2003b)? The idea of procedural justice lies at, or close, to the heart of many of these questions, and the thesis can, in one sense, be seen as an exploration of the procedural justice model in the British context.

The very first question from the first strand underpins what follows. The prevalence of personal contact with the police within the general population will be affected by patterns of crime, police responses to these, developments in the role and functions of the police, and broader social themes such as changes in work and leisure patterns. This element of the thesis is essentially descriptive, but it will also address some broader policy and theoretical concerns. In particular it will interrogate common assumptions that the experience of police in late- or post-modern conditions has become more diverse and fragmented, for a host of reasons ranging from increasing privatisation of elements of the police role (Bayley and Shearing 1996) to ever-increasing social pluralism (Vaughan 2007). Diversification may well have occurred, but countervailing themes in both general social theory (Beck 1992; Bauman 2000b) and policing studies specifically (Jones and Newburn 2002) have suggested that it is not the inevitable outcome of current social conditions. On the contrary the homogenising impact of social change and the formalization of social control (ibid.) may have lead to a growing similarity in experiences of the police, across some indicators at least.

Secondly, how does the public assess contacts with officers? Which elements of the encounter, and which police behaviours, do people place most importance on? It is this element of the thesis which constitutes an attempt to systematically apply and test, within the constraints of available data, the theory of procedural justice in the UK context. Empirical work on the model has before now been largely carried out in the US (although see Tyler 2007), a fact which has substantially limited its potential appeal. The distinct nature of the US situation, from the political emphasis on individual rights through to economic, social and geographical racial segregation and other social divisions, may mean that procedural fairness is more important there than elsewhere. However the procedural justice model is based on psychological understandings of judgement formation which should find purchase elsewhere (Thibaut and Walker 1975; Lind and Tyler 1988; Lind, Kanfer et al. 1990). It holds that fair process and decent treatment are valued not just for their own sake, but because they communicate to people shared group membership and messages of inclusion and exclusion. The theory should hold outside the US, but this cannot be assumed to be the case. I will suggest, therefore, that procedural justice concerns will be important elements in public judgements about personal contacts with the police in the United Kingdom; but not, however, make the assumption that other elements – material or instrumental concerns for example – will be unimportant.

The procedural fairness of direct contacts will not be the only theoretical concern. Recent work has suggested that expectations of the police prior to the encounter, indeed, their perceived legitimacy, will be vital components in the formulation of judgements (Skogan 2006; Tyler and Fagan 2008). What people bring to the contact may affect every aspect of it as well as any conclusions which are drawn. Any procedural justice effect identified must therefore be placed in the context of orientations toward the police which exist prior to any direct experience. That said, I will follow the lead of Tyler and other US work and propose that procedural justice has an effect in addition to or alongside these broader themes which makes it particularly suitable for policies which seek to reassure the public and enhance police legitimacy by improving the quantity and quality of police-public interactions.

The final distinct aspect of the first strand of the thesis will pick up on this last point and carry it forward to examine in depth how contact has an impact on trust, confidence and legitimacy. Similar concerns to those above will be raised and explored, but most important will be, firstly, consideration of the precise mechanisms through which contact experiences impact on trust in the police and the legitimacy of the police institution. Secondly, in light

of discussions which have suggested that the effects of personal experience are much more likely to be negative than positive (Skogan 2006), the extent to which contact can improve as well as damage police legitimacy will be examined. Finally, the focus will move to the issue of what effects personal contact, as well as other potential roots or sources of legitimacy, may have on willingness to support and cooperate with the police – that is, on the expressed consent of the public.

Moving on to the second strand of argument, procedural justice will remain a key component of the discussion, but again it will not stand alone. Of particular importance will be an assessment of the effect of fairness judgements on trust and legitimacy in comparison to other elements possibly formative of opinions about the police – how effective it is in fighting crime, how far it appears engaged with and answerable to the community, and the extent to which it is held accountable for broader social factors not often considered its primary concern. Discussion will also focus on the ways in which opinions of the police are influenced by orientations toward the state, nation or community, reflecting the positioning of the police in the literature as representative, even embodiment, of these wider structures. These broader ideas will influence how experiences of the police translate into trust or legitimacy. Equally, however, the ways in which public expectations and judgements of the police are formed will contain much information about the position afforded it as an institution and organisation, for example in understandings of the relationship between individual, nation and state.

The second strand of the thesis will therefore seek to probe deeper into some of the ideas underlying the procedural justice model, with regard particularly to the idea of shared group membership and what this means for the relationship between police and public. But it will also go further, to consider some of the reasons why, beyond procedural fairness, people may profess support for the police. Of particular interest will be consideration of the extent to which ideas about policing may draw on basic, underlying social-psychological orientations or motivations, such as the need to maintain group cohesion, maintain order, and address the problem of out-groups. What is perhaps most at stake here is individual's moral and normative understandings of their social environment and their propensity to act on those understandings. The sociological literature would insist on the involvement of the police in these and related processes, since the police are, in the UK at least, a primary mechanism through which normative order is maintained. But what does this actually entail 'on the ground'? To what extent can individual's opinions of the police – the trust they

have in it, the legitimacy they grant to it – be linked empirically to more general, or foundational, aspects of their world-views?

The basic message of this thesis will therefore be: personal experience matters. However else people obtain information about the police, and whatever the content of that information, their personal experiences will be key moments in the formation of their views. More deeply held social and moral concerns will be equally important in attitude formation, but they will not 'trump' what happens during face to face encounters. This makes effective police handling of face-to-face encounters with the public vital. Procedural justice concerns will be central to these interactions, but they will not be the only issues at stake. The messages individuals take from such encounters will be important in developing, or destroying, trust and confidence in the police, and reproducing the legitimacy central to the effective functioning of policing (at least as this is understood in the United Kingdom). If current policing policies are to succeed in closing the reassurance gap and enhancing the standing of the police they must attend to the quality of personal contacts. But they must also recognise that opinions of the police are heavily structured by concerns about the nature of society, the direction and extent of social change, and questions of norms, values, and morality.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Defining the object of study – who, or what, are the police?

Policing, in the sense of a set of social control processes, has existed in some form or other in all human societies (Robinson, Scaglion et al. 1994). Early usage of the term police itself in 16th century Europe referred to governance broadly conceived; later, it started to denote a more specific set of institutions and practises directed at reproducing an ordered, orderly and properly constituted (state) social system (Emsley 2007). Although enhancing peace and stability for *all* those living under that system was often a stated aim, it was the security of the state itself, and its rulers, which was usually most at stake:

> "Police in the strict sense refers to everything needed for the maintenance of civil life, thus for discipline and order and well-being among the subjects in the towns, and for the growth of the peasantry." Johann von Justi (1756) (quoted in Liang 1992: 1)

However *the* police, an organised body of people with a specific set of duties and responsibilities limited primarily to crime and the maintenance of order, is a product only of the last two hundred or so years. Exactly when the first such 'police force' came into being is unclear: despite the existence in mid-18th century Paris of the *lieutenant general de police*, commanding a force of around 3,000 men (Emsley 2007: 65), and similar arrangements in other European cities around the same time, it is the establishment of the Metropolitan police in 1829 which is still generally cited as the first instance of a police force in the modern sense (Reiner 2000; Emsley 2009).

Precise definitions of what the police actually is (or are) have proved even more elusive. In a well-known attempt Bittner (1975) defines the police as the body responsible for dealing with situations requiring 'non-negotiably coercible' remedies, taking a functionalist line which conceives what the police *are* to be determined to by what they *do*. Or perhaps more correctly, the police are defined by the tools they have to address the huge range of situations they are called upon to deal with. Famously, these situations can be defined as moments when "something-that-ought-not-to-be-happening" is occurring, "about-which-someone-had-better-do-something-now" (Bittner 2005: 161). Linking his definition of the police to the idea that the modern state is the monopolist of the use of legitimate force, Bittner positions the (potential) use of force as the central element of its role. In ideal-typical terms police procedures can not be opposed by the public, and if they are force may

be used to ensure that the will of the officers involved prevails. The police can be, and are, called upon in almost any situation involving disagreement, threat, or the possibility of danger (that is, from lost pets to crowd control to actual crimes). Although many such situations will be only tangentially connected to the criminal law, all imply expectations that the police, in most cases drawing on the authority the potential use of force gives them, will provide at least proximal solutions.

It has become increasingly obvious over the past 15 to 20 years that the positioning of the public police as the only, or even the primary, agent of policing in liberal democracies is increasingly outdated. Indeed, some authors have noted that, to a greater or lesser extent, the public police have *never* held this role, and that 'policing beyond the police' (Crawford 2003) or private policing has always been an important element in the maintenance of public order (Johnston 1992). Newburn (2001) notes that many commentators have begun to talk of 'security networks', within which private security guards, CCTV, and other correlates of "mass private property" (Shearing and Stenning 1981) work alongside or with the public police both in the enforcement of law and order and in many of the traditional police service functions. The election of New Labour in 1997 also triggered a massive growth in quasi-public policing – Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), Street Wardens, and so on, who in many ways occupy an area of middle ground, publicly employed but with few of the legal and symbolic powers available to sworn police officers. More than ever there is a need to conceptualise *the police*, as the publicly funded guardians and arbitrators of the law – or the holders of the monopoly of the legitimate use of force – separately from the activity of *policing*, which in late modern society is conducted by many disparate institutions and bodies as well as via the informal social controls which have always operated to impose and regulate normative behaviour.

Yet, while in much academic and policy discourse police and policing are indeed increasingly treated as two distinct areas of concern, with the latter enclosing the former as well as many other activities, organisations and more ephemeral social behaviours, there is little evidence to support the idea that such distinctions are drawn by the general public. There may even be some justification in the public's apparent unwillingness to let go of 'policing by the police', not because an array of other organisations are not involved in policing, but because this has not led to a decline in the power of the public police, nor a significant shift of their core responsibilities to other agencies (Reiner and Newburn 2004). For all that the paramount position of the UK police as state organised and funded

specialists in the provision of policing has been challenged by the growth of plural policing, there has been a gradual *accretion* of powers to the public police over the past 20 years, particularly through the passage of legislation designed to combat terrorism. This has left the modern day police with a set of powers that "far exceeds" those of the ordinary citizen (ibid: 606) and, equally, earlier generations of police. The public police may have much more competition than previously, but it also has considerably more power and, arguably, an ever increasing profile. Notwithstanding this apparent contradiction, there is surely little doubt that the majority of people, when asked who 'does' policing would answer "the police", meaning sworn officers with all the traditional set of responsibilities and abilities, the monopoly of the use of legitimate force, and dressed in a dark blue uniform.

For this reason, if nothing else, the terms 'police' and 'policing' are intended in what follows to apply almost exclusively to the public police and not to other agencies involved in the broader activities of modern day policing. It is recognised that this ignores the ambiguous position of PCSOs. Although the extent to which a distinction between PC and PCSO is drawn among most people remains unclear (Cooke 2005), it seems certain that such distinctions are drawn, and differences in perceptions of and orientations toward PCSOs in contrast to the police would be a fruitful area of further research.

Trust, confidence and legitimacy

In order to function effectively and appropriately, public police forces in democratic societies require the trust and confidence of the people they police – they need to be seen as the legitimate holders of the power their position grants (Hough 2003; Jackson and Sunshine 2007). This is particularly true in the United Kingdom where, with the possible exception of Northern Ireland, the dominant perception, if not reality, has been that policing occurs with the consent of those policed (Reiner 2000). To fully explore the implications of direct contact with the police for trust, confidence and legitimacy it is first necessary to examine the meaning of terms in these terms in the current setting.

Legitimacy – what is it and where can we find it?

Social theorists from Machiavelli onwards have seen legitimacy as a key feature of social institutions, especially in the context of the modern nation-state. A huge number of definitions and applications have been advanced. Broad definitions have conceptualised legitimacy as a kind of auxiliary process which explains the stability of "any structure, at

any level, that emerges and is maintained by other basic social processes" (Zelditch 2001: 40). At this level any social formation must by definition be in some sense legitimate if it is to function and be viable in the long term. Other definitions of legitimacy have been more concretely grounded. Weber (1978) linked legitimacy specifically to structures of domination, to the power to command and duty to obey, while for Habermas (1979) legitimacy represents a political order's worthiness to be recognised. The discussion which follows attempts to sketch the outline of what legitimacy might mean and how it might be reproduced, with, of course, particular emphasis on police legitimacy.

A Weberian understanding underpins many more recent discussions. Here, what is ultimately at stake is recognition of an authority as legitimate among those subject to it. Legitimacy is constituted collectively through the beliefs and practises of social groups, wherein the legitimated object is construed as consistent with cultural beliefs, norms and values (Johnson, Dowd et al. 2006). Any particular individual need not fully 'buy into' these ideas for legitimacy to be present – what is important is that they (a) believe others around them do so, and (b) act in ways congruent with this belief (ibid.). Despite this slippage between collective and individual understandings, legitimacy is commonly portrayed as "a property of an authority or institution that leads people to feel that it is entitled to be deferred to and obeyed" (Sunshine and Tyler 2003a: 514). Legitimate instructions are to be followed because this is experienced *subjectively* as the right thing to do. The duty to obey which legitimate authorities command is held to be experienced subjectively to be right, proper or natural. The power of command is seen as just, even inherent, while the duty to obey is at the very least voluntarily offered, and may in fact be seen as a given, part of the natural state of affairs.

However, Habermas (1979) insists legitimacy is a contestable validity claim, never given in a particular social context but produced and reproduced by the behaviour and interactions of individuals, groups, and social structures. This process may often be marked by difference and conflict: Gramsci (1991) saw hegemony, in many way equivalent to legitimacy, as resulting from coercive state power and consent engineered by the institutions of civil society. In other words, legitimacy is something constructed by the dominant class to mask the true nature of its power. More recent authors have also expressed concerns about the power of legitimating processes to obscure or even validate economic and social inequalities (MacCoun 2005).

Beyond the conflictual nature of legitimation processes lies an arguably more fundamental issue, that of their actual content. What is it that makes commands issued by legitimate authorities imperative, or their authority or governance part of the natural state of things? Barker (1990) suggests that at the subjective level the claims of legitimate authorities are experienced as essentially moral, a notion which suggests the police monopoly of 'non-negotiable coercion' is underpinned by a normative understanding of its role and function. The congruence between Bittner's theory of the police function and Barker's view of political legitimacy as the right to issue irrefutable commands should furthermore remind us that the legitimacy of the police is in part political, bound up with the legitimacy of the state.

That all considerations of legitimacy involve a normative, ideological or moral element is a position most forcibly outlined by Beetham (1991). Using as his starting point a critique of Weber and the idea that although legitimacy resides in the beliefs of those subject to legitimated authority, these beliefs have no necessary connection to the subjective or objective needs or preferences of the governed, Beetham holds that those granting legitimacy always do so on the basis that it is an expression of common shared values. He suggests three dimensions which must each be fulfilled for a power to be considered legitimate: its conformity to a set of rules; the justifiability of these rules in terms of shared beliefs; and the expressed consent of those governed or otherwise affected by the power. In terms of police legitimacy, these dimensions might be represented by, firstly, the extent to which the exercise of police power is perceived to adhere to the rules laid down for its use (which may not be rules in a legal sense but rather operate on a different basis, for example morally). Secondly, that these rules should be held as justifiable by those policed, that is, they should express common shared values. Thirdly, that the legitimacy of the police will be expressed by the actions of those policed, in as much as they defer to police authority, comply with instructions and so on. No one element is prioritised, but all must co-exist in the *relationship* between police and policed for the police to be legitimate.

Barker and Beetham move the concept of legitimacy beyond simple recognition or an imperative to obey among the governed to encompass both the normative content of the rules which establish it and the actions of the authorities holding it. Legitimacy becomes an active process and a central element of the relationship between authorities and the population, or between the governing and the governed. However, while Beetham's work appears to emphasise the active role of those subject to legitimate authority in its

production, Barker stresses that much legitimacy is habitual, often taking the form of an acceptance of unquestioned right. Indeed this is seen as the strongest form of legitimacy. He also privileges political legitimacy, seeing it as more specific and more absolute than other forms (for example those of non-state actors and institutions) and as such seems to suggest for it a structuring role, particularly when it is 'habitual'. Legitimacy in many cases precedes the experience of actually encountering and acceding to state institutions. On this view the ideological or moral components of legitimacy only come to the fore at times when it is under pressure or dispute.

To summarise, legitimacy represents the right to be recognised, to be seen as the appropriate institution with authority over a particular aspect of social life or set of problems (Habermas 1979). It is also often habitual, and a "largely unquestioned acceptance of authority ... lies close to the heart of political legitimacy" (Barker 1990: 33). The unquestioned nature of much legitimacy implies that it is formative and enabling, creating the possibility and structures of social life. The fact that most people, most of the time, more or less unthinkingly go along with the edicts and instructions of authorities enables them to function effectively within a social system which would otherwise, if active judgements had always to be made, be overwhelmingly complex.

In contrast, Tyler and his collaborators, concentrating on the implications of legitimacy in terms of individual behaviour (see below) are more concerned with the ways in which legitimacy functions at the interface between individual and institution. The manner in which legitimate power is exercised becomes much more important; why, specifically, it is that orders are seen as something which should be obeyed not as result of the immediate threat of force, or as a result to some kind of cost/benefit analysis, but because the authority issuing the order is morally entitled to do so, and that is right and proper *in itself* to obey (Tyler 1990). This view is complemented by Beetham's insistence that such moral entitlement is actively assessed, via both the content of the rules by which the authority operates and the extent to which it complies with them. Legitimacy is in these senses both more mundane and more immediate, implying ongoing assessments of the nature and content of rule systems and the behaviours of authorities. Legitimacy can thus be understood as a dynamic process which, although rooted in deeply entrenched structures of power and affect is also something which is experienced and indeed tested by and through everyday existence.

Trust and confidence in the police

As is the case for legitimacy, trust has been defined in many different ways by social theorists. It can be seen as a way of reducing the complexity of the social world, of anticipating the future and acting as though future events were fixed rather than fluid, and of increasing tolerance of uncertainty (Luhmann 1979). Trust is inextricably linked with risk. It involves an assumption or "generalized expectation" that the other will act in a predictable way and will handle their innate freedom and "disturbing potential for diverse action" (ibid: 39) in keeping with the personality which they have presented and made visible within specific social settings. And they may not, in fact, be predictable. Trust is therefore both a stance taken in relation to the possibilities of future events and also emergent from orientations (conscious or unconscious) to the behaviours and assumed future behaviours of other actors embedded in social relations. Similarly, Giddens (1991) sees trust as a way of 'bracketing out' potential occurrences which, if all were to be considered, would induce "paralysis of the will" (ibid: 3) and feelings of engulfment. Through and with trust the world is experienced as stable, coherent, and in many senses, real.

Barber (1983) places stronger emphasis on the *location* of trust in the expectations actors have of each other within a relationship. Based on the general assumption that the world will continue more or less as it is, these expectations range from the general, that the behaviour of the other will serve to maintain and replicate the assumed natural and moral social order, to the specific, that the other will be technically competent in the roles assigned to them within social relationships and systems, and that they will also carry out their fiduciary obligations, that is, in certain situations place the interests of others above their own. In Barber's conceptualisation trust is less an orientation of the individual (although it is still also that) and more a product of a socially embedded relationship. A trust relationship as one in which valued outcomes are placed at risk from the (mis)behaviour of others (Tilly 2005).

While trust and confidence are often used synonymously, Luhmann (1988) draws an important distinction between them. While holding to the definition of trust outlined above, he underlines its active and enabling elements. Based on a relationship of trust one may act on an understanding that risks inherent in that action are ameliorated by the predictable behaviour of the trusted other. Confidence, on the other hand, is defined as a more passive stance; that expectations will not be disappointed or indeed that personal action need *not* be

taken because the object of confidence will fulfil its proper role. While trust, because it is based on assessments of risk, involves choice (whether to act or not) at a fundamental level, confidence inheres in situations were alternatives are not considered and choice appears unnecessary. Both confidence and trust are needed to make life under the conditions of modernity possible, existing in a dialectical relationship wherein one has the potential to either enhance or undermine the other.

Trust can therefore be seen in two complementary ways, with the second broadly following on and reinforcing (or undermining) the first. It is first a way of reducing future complexity, making the world apprehendable, apparently stable, and a place within which meaningful action is possible. But it is also located in the set of expectations which actors within social systems place on each other, based on prior experience and an understanding of the world as a stable and ordered place, an understanding itself generated by a need to reduce is complexity.

How then do these expectations come to be placed? Trust, whether conscious or not, is present in many relationships and situations. But by what mechanisms do these expectations come about? Concerned primarily with trust between and within organisations, Mollering (2006) addresses three routes to, or sources of, trust: reason, routine and reflexivity. Trust can be present either through a rational analysis of costs and benefits, because it has become institutionalised, or because individual trust acts form part of an iterative process, as small steps accumulate and develop into a trust relationship. While any or all of these mechanisms may be present in a specific situation they are not reducible to one another and describe distinct areas of concern. However Mollering finds difficulties with all three, the most important being that none can fully explain *initial* or formative acts of trust – rational choice theory, for example, cannot adequately explain why trust is so common, because it often appears more rational, on a cost-benefit basis, not to trust in unfamiliar or initiatory situations. This lacuna is filled by Mollering with the idea that trust contains an element of non- or pre-rational thought, a "further element of socio-psychological quasi-religious faith' (Mollering 2006: 109, quoting Simmel 1990: 179). Trust at its root involves a 'leap of faith' which forms the foundation on which the general routes to trusting relationships can be laid. In this it involves a suspension of reason and retains an element of faith, as Giddens (1991: 19) also notes. This idea has been picked up by police scholars – Smith (2007a) suggests that trust in the police is constituted initially by a leap of faith to trust, and that this initial trust is then tested against subsequent experience.

But is trust purely an act of faith, grounded in little more than an appreciation of shared humanity? Does it stem from a pre-rational realisation by the individual that life would be impossible without it (Möllering 2006)? Mistzal (1996), while agreeing that trust is ultimately functional, indeed that it is a crucial basis for the social order, places more emphasis on the social nature of trust. Trust not only stems from individual calculation, or cooperation, and therefore ultimately rational choices or leaps of faith, but is also immanent in the social order itself. On this view much trust is stable, existing because of habit, through reputation or emerging from structures of memory. Mistzal uses Bourdieu's concept of habitus to describe how this type of trust is inculcated and maintained, in the process replacing the leap of faith with a more sociologically grounded understanding of the ways in which social structures operate to predispose, even force, individuals to place trust in the institutions or relationships which determine the conditions of social life. It might then be suggested that trust in the police is less of a leap of faith than a unspoken assumption, a constitutive fact of daily life – albeit one which is only ever contingent, for as Mollering cautions trust retains a core of agency which is inviolable. While we may be predisposed to trust the police, we can never be forced to do so.

Public trust in the police must therefore be bound up in the relationships between police and people, whether these are real or only imagined (trust in the police in the absence of personal experience implies expectations of their behaviour in any future contact, however these expectations might be derived). Trust may imply expectations of technical competence or assumptions that officers will behave in certain ways in certain situations: for example, that the person arrested or charged is the one whom the evidence suggests is guilty; that the correct procedures will be followed in relation to the reporting of a burglary such that any future prosecution is not compromised; or that officers have the physical and technical competence to control a difficult situation. Furthermore, the police are expected to behave in line with their fiduciary obligations and responsibilities (Barber 1983), that is, to carry out their duties such that they place the interests of others above their own. Distrust, which Luhmann (1979) reminds us is not an absence of trust but an active antithetical orientation, would imply a belief that the police would not do these things, that is, not carry out, or not carry out competently, the roles and duties to which they have properly been assigned. Others have reached similar conclusions. For example, Goldsmith (2005) links trust in the police to the four dimensions of trustworthiness outline by Six (2003): ability, benevolence, dedication and ethics.

There is emerging empirical evidence to suggest that people's views of the police, or, in the phrase most commonly used in the UK, their trust and confidence (Jackson and Sunshine 2007), 'fit' many of the themes developed above. Drawing on American (see for example Tyler 1990; Tyler and Huo 2002; Skogan 2006; Reisig, Bratton et al. 2007) as well as British work (FitzGerald, Hough et al. 2002), recent studies of policing in England and Wales have begun to identify a number of interrelated aspects of public opinion. These include: the effectiveness of the police (physical and technical competence); the fairness with which it treats people (that it acts consistently and in accordance to a shared set of rules and values); and engagement with the communities it polices (understands and shares the priorities and values of those it serves) (Bradford, Jackson et al. 2008). Further work has shown that opinions of the police are also grounded in and related to exactly the type of wider social concerns the discussion above would suggest are important – for example, ideas about social cohesion, or the extent that people trust and get on with those around them (Jackson and Sunshine 2007).

The reproduction of trust, confidence and legitimacy

How then are trust, confidence and legitimacy related? Can useful distinctions even be drawn between them? The notion of a dual-layered legitimacy proffered above suggests several possibilities. It might be for example that there is a distinction between the legitimacy of the police as an institution and as an organisation. On one level the legitimacy of the police institution, entrusted with the power to intervene into people's lives to keep the peace and maintain the social order (Manning 2003) appears, in general, to be unchallenged. Very few voices are heard for the radical dismantling of the police, indeed, it is hard to image a modern state which did not have a police force (or service) of some kind. On the other hand, at the level of personal interaction or everyday experience, legitimacy is much more contested. And this will be, in great part, because the trust that in part underpins legitimacy (Tyler 1990; Tyler and Huo 2002) is challenged by lived experience. Luhmann (1979) describes the sensitivity of trust relations – those involved in interactions with the police may be intensely attuned to the generation of messages and meanings which speak not only of the trustworthiness and legitimacy of the police. At this lower level judgements about the behaviour of the police as an organisation are likely to be much more important.

Easton's (1975) distinction between specific and diffuse support serves as a useful reference point here. Specific support is directed at the perceived behaviour of authoritative

institutions, either in the form of identifiable actions or a general idea of performance. It is evaluative and empirically testable as part of everyday life, and it adheres to specific organisations or individuals – to, for example, a particular police force. Specific support clearly relates to both fiduciary trust (judgements about the behaviour of specific police officers, for example) and assessments of the technical competence of authorities. In contrast diffuse support for an authority is durable, by and large independent of short term events. It represents an attachment to the authority for its own sake, and is prior to considerations of performance because it attaches to institutions rather than organisations. Diffuse support therefore closely relates to confidence, or perhaps more appositely, to the legitimacy of the police institution, or in other words 'the police' in more abstract, ideal-typical terms

The concept of *habitus*, "systems of durable, transposable dispositions … structuring structures … principles which generate and organize practices and representations" (Bourdieu 1990: 53) serves as one way to draw out the implications of this institution-organisation, diffuse-specific distinction. It might be suggested that the police hold a position within the habitus, within the "structuring structures" of social life, such that their institutional legitimacy is durably reproduced. It is these structures which ensure that not having *a* police (although not necessarily *this* police) is almost unthinkable. Mawby (2002) notes that the production of such 'inevitability' is a key feature of legitimated social structures, and that Garland (1990) sees the position of the prison in modern society in just the same way, in that it has become almost impossible to think of 'punishment' without also thinking of 'prison'. The habitus acts to reproduce itself, structuring, ordering and limiting the possibilities of action and thought such that the dispositions it engenders are in a sense predictive of future contingencies (since it structures understanding of not only of events but also the possibilities of events).

A central element of Bourdieu's sociology is the idea that the habitus will recreate itself through the independent activity of those 'within' it. One possible impetus for such activity is provided by the idea of social control as discussed by Black (1998). Here, the need to define and react to deviant behaviour is both socially innate and fundamentally moral. A variety of structures (or 'styles') exist to formulate and manage responses to deviance – penal, compensatory, therapeutic and conciliatory. Not only are the police implicated in, indeed created for, the exercise of all four (although social control can also be effected in many other ways), its very existence means it will be invoked to provide social control,

often, even usually, to the exclusion of other options. That is, individuals living in contexts where the police has achieved legitimacy will act in ways recognisant, even constitutive, of that very legitimacy in part *because* they have a need to exercise social control. The institutional legitimacy of the police is recursively (re)created by the social pre-conditions for its existence and role.

Institutional police legitimacy should therefore be seen as self-replicative, the very existence of 'the police' predicting and presupposing the existence of a similar institution in the future and structuring responses to current events to ensure this will be the case. Kleinig (1996) makes a similar point with reference to the idea of policing by 'consent', the almost mythical basis of British policing (Reiner 1992). Consent to police actions among the policed is not given as if in a pure Lockean contract, with individuals electing to submit themselves to police authority through some free and rational process of choice. Rather, consent inheres in situations wherein people are:

> "...socialized into an existing range of structures, expectations and institutions, and their choices are to a significant extent limited by these ... consent operates within a framework provided by already existing ways of seeing and doing" (Kleinig 1996: 16)

But the idea of habitus does not rule out individual agency, the intrusion of 'objective reality' into the structuring confines of the habitus, and the role of differential chance and opportunity. At this point we might turn to the second level of legitimacy, that at which judgements about the police as an organisation, and specific issues of trust, come into play. Here lived experience, wherein the police are not encountered as an abstract institution but as a real body of men and women, with all the potential frailties this implies, practice becomes much more important. Legitimacy becomes both more contestable and more mutable, and trust relationships focus more on specific issues such as technical competence. The implication is that the higher level is dominant but not monolithic, while change at the lower level is likely to be ephemeral, as the propensities engendered by the habitus reassert themselves over time. However, lower level change may add up or reach a tipping point such that change at the higher level occurs. Luhmann (1979: 29) envisages just such a tipping point, suggesting that trust is withdrawn from a trust object only after a boundary as been crossed. Goldsmith (2005) goes further, using the concept of habitus to describe and explain the existence of structurally problematic relationships between police and certain social groups. Different groups have different sets of dispositions toward the

police which, among other things, will affect how encounters with officers are read (ibid: 451).

Direct contact may thus be an extremely important moment, a 'proving ground' in which the behaviour of officers is read against and influences the trustworthiness of the police. And this will, in turn, affect the legitimacy of the police, which is:

> "... potentially held up for scrutiny when any policing activity is engaged in. Each event which brings into question police integrity and competence ... communicates particular images and threatens to undermine police legitimacy". (Mawby 2002: 53)

The experience of such activity may be read in the light of the established legitimacy of the police but may, at times, reflect back onto it; and, of course, empirical research has shown time and again that direct contact with the police damages trust and confidence (FitzGerald, Hough et al. 2002; Allen, Edmonds et al. 2006; Skogan 2006). On the other hand, if the habitus structures a certain police legitimacy which is prior to assessments of the behaviour of the police organisation, this would imply that while police organisational legitimacy (and trust) may be damaged by direct contact and other factors, in as much as no tipping point is reached and institutional legitimacy is maintained it will act over time to redress the damage, such that organisational legitimacy recovers, and a certain level of trust is maintained in the long run. This process may help explain why, although there appears to be a strong negative impact from contact on trust and confidence this has not resulted in a 'crash' in public trust in the police, and the police remain one of the more trusted public institutions (Roberts and Hough 2005: 60), or why the police are the 'teflon service', seemingly always emerging intact no matter what new scandal or incompetence comes to light (Reiner 2003). However there is always the potential for radical change and the emergence of a new habitus which does not inculcate police legitimacy but rather something else, as for example seen in orientations to the police in many South American countries (Hinton 2006) and elsewhere in the developing world. Furthermore, in a stratified, multi-cultural and increasingly diverse social environment alternate 'structuring structures' are possible within one society, such that some individuals or groups have quite different durable dispositions, and will experience the police in the light of these, maintaining quite different levels of trust and confidence.

Policing, legitimacy, nation and state

One immediate question arising from the above is how, exactly, does a certain position for the police within the habitus come to exist and be reproduced? One way in which broader structures of feeling and affect may be implicated in experiences of the police lies in the confluence of ideas and emotions around policing, nation, and state. This nexus can be linked to the legitimacy of the police in the terms discussed above, and describing it allows consideration of how police legitimacy may not only fostered by the dominant structures of feeling (Williams 1964; cf. Loader and Mulcahy 2003) but may also be undermined by them as inherent contradictions begin to surface. Habermas (1979) makes a number of points about legitimation of the institutions and political structures of the modern state. Most importantly, legitimacy is linked to both universality and an ability to maintain a normatively determined identity. That is, institutions which are seen to treat some groups/people differently to others, or whose activities are held to be undermining the identity of the state, may suffer challenges to their legitimacy. Universality is a reflection and reaffirmation of the 'sovereignty of the people'. The modern state draws at least some of its legitimacy from the idea that it represents *all* those who constitute it, and in particular from the notion that it represents *the nation as a whole.* The legitimacy of the state is tied up with its relationship to the nation; political legitimation strategies become effective in as much as they are perceived to be representative of or furthering national interests and cohesiveness. By definition this process entails defining who is included and who excluded, and whose interests are being furthered at the expense of whom. Legitimation processes therefore serve from one perspective to designate and identify those who are or are not included in the 'universalistic' remit of the state.

As a core institution of the state the police are deeply implicated in these processes: charged with applying and upholding the criminal law, held to be equal for all, but also, conversely, with patrolling the borders of inclusion in the 'respectable' or 'real' community, identifying and dealing with those who are excluded and thus not accepted members of the group (Waddington 1999; Tyler and Huo 2002). Tensions in either role could lead to an undermining of legitimacy. Furthermore, the police are conflated with the nation in many ways, from iconography (the British bobby) to their role as the primary emergency service, the first agency to attend almost any unusual or dangerous situation. A failure by the police to meet expectations about the 'British' way of doing things in any given situation will therefore again undermine its legitimacy.

This relationship has been discussed in much depth by criminologists and social theorists. While there is general agreement that the police need to be seen as legitimate in order to adequately fulfil their mandate, some have gone much further, linking police legitimacy to much wider themes of, on the one hand, national and class sentiments, and on the other, political accountability and representation. That the police powerfully convey images of order, justice and stability is common within the literature (Loader 1997; Taylor 1999; Girling, Loader et al. 2000; Reiner 2000; Loader and Mulcahy 2003). These authors have also seen in the imagination of the police expressions of nationhood and the 'spirit' of the nation-state, as well as the slightly more prosaic observation that the police are a highly visible image of state power with which, nonetheless, it is possible to interact on a mundane basis, in contrast to many other embodiments of the state. Such discussions highlight that the police are substantively different from many other public bodies and begin to cast light both on the importance of the police *institution* to many sections of the population and also why reactions to the police *organisation* can be as strong and as varied as they appear to be.

The procedural justice model

The procedural justice model developed by Tom Tyler and colleagues in the United States brings together many of the themes discussed above – the nature of trust in legal authorities, the relationship between trust and legitimacy, what the police represent and *mean* to people – in an empirically robust and replicable framework. Developed primarily within a social-psychological context the model links the legitimacy of the police, other criminal justice agencies and the courts system (and indeed a wider range of institutions and organisations) to the perceived fairness of the processes through which judgements are made and authority exercised. Perceptions of fair process are associated with viewing the authority as legitimate and thus worthy of respect, deference and cooperation. Furthermore, the actions of such authorities, whether fair or not, are held to communicate and be read in the light of shared group membership and status within the group, or in contrast adversarial group relations (Tyler 1990; Sunshine and Tyler 2003a; Sunshine and Tyler 2003b; Tyler 2006). The idea of procedural justice is therefore intimately linked with personal experience (or at least expectations of and opinions about putative personal experience), and is thus particularly relevant to this thesis.

A useful way to understand the implications of the procedural justice model is to look at its antithesis, an understanding of the foundations of police legitimacy which prioritises

instrumental concerns and/or distributive justice (the idea that justice should be applied fairly and equally across all groups and types of person). Under such a model police would gain acceptance if they are perceived by the public to be:

> "(1) creating credible sanctioning threats for those who break rules .... (2) effectively controlling crime and criminal behaviour (performance) and (3) fairly distributing police services across people and communities (distributive fairness)" (Sunshine and Tyler 2003a: 514).

Here, the legitimacy of the police resides primarily in its ability to perform its appointed roles as agent of the criminal justice system, crime controller and thief-taker, and/or in a fair distribution of these roles and services across different social groups and geographical areas. It is important to remember that these are indeed important aspects of police legitimacy, and are also the major functions of the police as currently understood, both in a governmental or administrative sense and in lay understandings (Roberts and Hough 2005). However, Tyler and his associates have accumulated a considerable body of evidence (see MacCoun 2005) that suggests that when it comes to personal experiences, procedural justice or fairness is the most important factor affecting or determining legitimacy, although the elements of police behaviour outlined above will remain important in certain circumstances. It may be for example that some version of the instrumental model will be more applicable or important to those who have had no recent personal contact with the police, or, to put it another way, it may be that those who have had contact will place more importance on the fairness of treatment that those who have not. Indeed, Tyler (2001) notes that it is precisely those with direct experience of legal authorities who emphasise quality of treatment the most. Furthermore, personal experience appears to change how people think about legal authorities; those who have had direct contact are "subsequently more strongly influenced by their evaluations of how people are treated ... (but) less strongly influenced by the judgements about outcomes" (Tyler 2001: 234). However the impact of vicarious experience (Rosenbaum, Schuck et al. 2005) may equally mean that questions about fairness may have important effects on police legitimacy even among those who have had no personal contact themselves.

Sunshine and Tyler suggest that, since legitimacy is distinct from evaluations of performance there must be a normative basis for support for the police which does not rely on assessments of the quality of the job they are doing. They also note that ethical

judgements about obligation and responsibility seem to be important aspects of public support for the police.

> "People are not primarily instrumental in their reactions to the police – in other words, judging the police in instrumental terms. Instead, their reactions to the police are linked to their basic social values" (Sunshine and Tyler 2003a: 534).

This is a key theme of the procedural justice model which in its alignment of legitimacy with basic social values recalls both Beetham's notion of legitimacy and Easton's diffuse support. As described by Tyler (1990) and Tyler and Huo (2002), the model posits that the quality of decision making and treatment of the public by legal authorities such as the police leads to feelings of both procedural justice and motive based trust, the outcomes of which are decision acceptance and satisfaction with the decision maker. Procedural justice is marked and demonstrated by transparency, fair, equitable and respectful treatment, and a feeling of control ('voice' – Hirschman 1974) among the public over the processes through which they are being treated. Tyler and his co-workers consistently privilege procedural justice above instrumental and distributive justice concerns, and they do this for empirical reasons (the evidence suggests that people tend to emphasise procedural justice over distributive justice or instrumental concerns); on normative grounds (judgements on the equity of distributions will be variable and thus impossible to satisfy to the satisfaction of all, whereas fair and decent treatment for all is at the least a theoretically attainable goal); and for reasons of practicality (the police are not often in the position to provide instrumentally satisfying outcomes to those they encounter)

Motive based trust is the second key concept in Tyler's work. This is a notion of trust which places less emphasis on trustworthiness as a property of individuals, organisations or institutions which leads them to be trusted on the basis of predictability and perceived willingness or ability to keep promises, and more on estimates of character and mutual affect, the perception that those who are trusted have the best interests of the truster at heart. This idea or type of trust is therefore clearly linked to Barber's (1983) idea of fiduciary trust. Motive based trust is primarily social rather than instrumental in character, since it is premised on the idea that truster and trustee have shared social bonds which make it possible for the one to imagine, apprehend and influence the interests of the other. Tyler's work demonstrates that motive based trust in the police and other criminal justice agencies is highly correlated with their perceived legitimacy, as assessed for example

through measures of decisions acceptance and willingness to defer to the authority of officers.

At the root of Tyler's concept of motive based trust is the premise that it is based on shared group membership. Motive based trust encourages the idea that the police care about one's interests. But, beyond this, always implicated in its formation and negotiation is communication by police officers, through their actions (or inactions), about the status of those they are dealing with. The quality and nature of treatment at the hands of the police sends signals to the public about their membership of the group which the police represent and indeed symbolise; that is, in most cases, the nation-state as a community of affect and belonging. One is reminded here of Waddington's (1999) notion that the police patrol the borders of respectability, or inclusion and exclusion. Fundamentally, Tyler's thesis is that by their actions – and recall that the basic model suggests both procedural justice and motive based trust have the same antecedents – the police talk to people about their place in society and their relative worth within it. To the extent that such communication fosters the feeling that police and public are 'on the same side' motive based trust will develop and police legitimacy will be enhanced. To the extent that police behaviour communicates separation of interests and a lack of shared identity, motive based trust will decline and legitimacy will be damaged.

The procedural justice model has thus far been applied relatively rarely outside the United States. There are exceptions, however, often from contexts other than policing, including the courts and prisons. For example, in a panel study Grimes (2006) found that perceptions of procedural fairness in the decision-making process influenced both trust and decision acceptance among respondents to a survey dealing with a controversial train-line extension in Sweden. Analysis of orientations to the post-unification German court system suggested that 'legalistic' processes were favoured over fair ones, although the extent to which 'legalistic' fits into a procedural justice framework is unclear (Baird 2001), while procedural fairness has been shown to have some mitigating effect on largely negative views of the courts among young offenders in Canada (Sprott and Greene 2008). Sparks and Bottoms (1995) found that procedural fairness (as well as regular and efficient services and, indeed, distributive justice) had some part to play in maintaining consent inside prisons.

Closer to the subject at hand, Hinds and Murphy (2007) used a procedural justice framework in an analysis that suggested that while procedural fairness was important to their Australian sample, instrumental factors were also apparent, in contrast to the apparent situation in the United States. Procedural justice effects have also been identified in the extremely negative views of speed cameras – as automated policing systems – among British motorists (Wells 2008). Speed cameras are experienced as unfair and unjust *even though* they, in theory at least, 'blindly' enforce the law: what motorists perceive to be missing is recognition of individual circumstance and context. This must serve as a useful reminder that procedural justice or fairness is unlikely to be simply about a 'flat' fairness and consistency. It will also include more human elements, even up to some level of *in*consistency (ibid: 814) in as much as this communicates a shared understanding of the specific exigencies around what should and what should not be criminalised. These examples seem broadly supportive of the applicability of a procedural justice approach outside in non-US contexts. However Smith (2007a) provides a note of caution, pointing out that the limited scope of extant procedural justice research means that its universal applicability is not proven, and similar warnings have come from other sources (Tonry 2007; Tankebe 2008)

Procedural fairness is a potentially powerful tool for the police managers since it is something over which they have at least some control over, unlike the major components of more instrumental models of public opinion. The legal sanctions available, genuine change in the crime rate and even the way in which policing is distributed (in the sense that budgets, and therefore the 'volume' of policing available for a particular area, are determined by Government) are not primarily under the control of the police. But the way individual officers treat members of the public is, and by using fair procedures police may not only enhance 'trust and confidence' but also increase compliance with their instructions 'on the streets' and with the law more generally. By treating people fairly and decently, police may be able to set up a virtuous circle wherein "... citizens reciprocate respectful treatment with cooperation and obedience ...not only to the directives of individual decision makers but to the commands of the law more generally" (Kahan 2002).

There is concern among a few scholars that procedural justice may act to obfuscate, conceal or otherwise diminish the impact of (and therefore also potential to change) the patently unfair distribution of outcomes within society (MacCoun 2005). In other words, while procedural justice or fairness may reconcile individuals to poor outcomes when dealing

with the police and courts it has little relation to the 'fairness' (whether distributive or in some other sense) of those outcomes themselves, while at the same time encouraging those involved to accept the decision whatever its actual content. Some have even gone as far as to discuss this in terms of false consciousness: MacCoun discusses Lind, Kanfer and Early's (1990) finding that judgements about the fairness of work allocations were enhanced by opportunities to voice opinions even when there was no chance of influencing the final decision – that is, people feel better about (and are presumably more likely to go along with) unfair allocations if they think that their thoughts on the matter have been heard.

Trust, confidence and personal contact

So far this review has concentrated on a discussion of rather abstract concepts and theories. I will now turn to one of the key empirical concerns of this thesis, the point of contact between police and public. In doing so, I will attempt to relate what might transpire during such encounters back to some of the key ideas outline above.

There is little doubt that trust and confidence in the police, as measured in the BCS by asking "how good a job" respondents think their local (or 'the') police are doing, has declined over the last 20-30 years (Reiner 2000; FitzGerald, Hough et al. 2002; Hough 2007a; Hough 2007b). In the context of longer term change since the 1950s, when the British police "enjoyed the whole-hearted approval of the majority of the population" (Reiner 2000: 49), the trend has been characterised by some as representing a continued, and serious, decline in the standing and indeed legitimacy of the police. As suggested in the introduction above there have however been criticisms of the idea that support for the police has 'haemorrhaged', based in part on interpretations of the survey question involved. In particular, Loader and Mulcahy (2003) note that descriptions of decline are largely based on BCS responses which give a 'very good' rating to the police – if 'fairly good' responses are taken into account support has actually been relatively constant since the early 1980s (see below). Furthermore, surveys routinely find that the police are one of the most popular public services, and certainly the post popular criminal justice agency (FitzGerald, Hough et al. 2002; Duffy, Wake et al. 2008). This residue or baseline of support, represented best perhaps by the fact that just under half of BCS respondents still give their local police an 'excellent or good' rating (Walker, Flatley et al. 2009: Table 5c), can clearly be linked to much of the discussion above. For many people the police still represent the nation as a

community of affect, being central to structures of feeling (Loader and Mulcahy 2003) which enable them to make sense of their lives. These ideas give reason to suppose that the dominant culture – or habitus – in the UK still encourages support for the police in the last instance. For many people, no matter what they think of an individual officer or policing policy, support – perhaps more accurately diffuse support – for the police *institution* remains relatively high.

Indications that any decline in support for the police may not be as serious as it sometimes presented are tempered, however, by a second phenomena, the so-called reassurance 'gap' (Duffy, Wake et al. 2008) or 'paradox' (Crawford 2007). In short, although crime rates have been falling in the UK since the mid 1990s (Nicholas, Kershaw et al. 2007), confidence in the police, and perceptions of crime trends, have not seen commensurate improvements. Despite the fact that the police have apparently been successful in its major role (in public understanding at least) it has not been rewarded by improved confidence ratings. This issue has become a central element of government policing policy, with programmes such as the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) set up specifically to combat fear of crime and improve confidence in the police (Tuffin, Morris et al. 2006). The NRPP draws on the signal crimes perspective (Innes 2004a; 2004b) to promote targeted policing addressing the issues most important to people, community engagement in setting priorities and taking action, and increasing the presence of "visible, accessible and locally known authority figures in neighbourhoods, in particular police officers and police community support officers" (Tuffin, Morris et al. 2006: xii). In other words, at least part of the NRPP programme is premised on improving the number and quality of contacts between police and public, and it is to this subject we now turn.

What then can be said about the history of police-public interactions? While many of the classic police studies monographs (for example Banton 1964; Cain 1973; Muir 1977; Holdaway 1983) contained a considerable amount of information about contacts between the police and public, this was largely presented from the viewpoint of sociologies of the police, meaning there was relatively little emphasis on the public experience of these encounters and any knock-on effects on opinions. This may have been because support for the police among the public was taken as a given, at least extremely well entrenched, among large sections of the population, as it appears to have been by Banton when he made his famous statement that it was on occasion worth studying a social institution (the police) that was functioning well. The situation changed in the early 1980s with the publication in

the space of a few years *Police and People in London* (Smith 1983), reports from the Islington Crime Survey (Jones, MacLean et al. 1986) and a number of Home Office papers, including the first report of the British Crime Survey (Hough and Mayhew 1983) as well as others (for example, Tuck and Southgate 1981). For the first time in the UK these reports attempted not only to map out who was coming into contact with the police but also how the public judged these encounters and the potential impacts on orientations toward the police. Much of this work was conducted, of course, in the aftermath of the Brixton, St Paul's and other riots, confrontations between police and Black Caribbean and other marginalised youth often caused in part by extremely negative experiences of the police (Gilroy 1987; Keith 1993; Hall 1993 (1978)).

Subsequent to this flurry of activity interest in public contact with the police *per se* (as opposed to symbolic and other aspects of the public imaginary) seems to have moved very much out of the academic spotlight in the UK. However the BCS continues to release general figures on rates of contact with the police. These show that rates of contact fluctuate largely in line with crime rates and have therefore been falling over the last decade (Bradford, Stanko et al. 2009). Perhaps the key point is not however year on year fluctuations but the fact that across the period covered by the BCS a very significant proportion of people come into contact with the police with the police each year – around 40 per cent according to recent survey waves (Allen, Edmonds et al. 2006). Despite the undoubted importance of media and other social representations in informing and even moulding opinions about the police (Mawby 2002; Leishman and Mason 2003), personal contact seems likely to remain a key factor in many people's experiences.

Categorising and enumerating types of contact

Police activity is primarily *reactive*, a response to calls made or information provided by the public (Waddington 1993; Bayley 1994). This is reflected by the nature of contacts between police and public. Surveys and other types of evidence have consistently found that not much more than half of all police-public contacts directly concern crime, although a significant proportion of those that don't are to do with things which might be crimes, such as suspicious behaviour or a ringing alarm (Smith 1983; Southgate 1986; FitzGerald, Hough et al. 2002; Allen, Edmonds et al. 2006). Despite this, detailed quantitative analysis of public contact with the police in the UK has primarily concentrated on police-initiated contacts in which the public are seen as suspects (at least potentially), most notably in examination of the disproportionate impact of stop and search activities on people from

ethnic minority groups (see, for example, Smith 1983; Norris, Fielding et al. 1992; Miller, Bland et al. 2001; Bowling and Philips 2002; FitzGerald, Hough et al. 2002; Jansson 2006). Analysis of public-initiated contacts has largely focused on the experiences and attitudes of victims of crime (Smith 1983; Allen, Edmonds et al. 2006), although Fiztgerald, Hough et al (2002) discuss 'users' of the police.

The most common way to include all contact with the police in analyses is to divide encounters into 'public-initiated' and 'police-initiated' (Skogan 1990; Rosenbaum, Schuck et al. 2005; Allen, Edmonds et al. 2006; Jansson 2006; Skogan 2006). This approach has the benefit of simplicity, with the vast majority of contacts falling unambiguously into one or other category. On the other hand, it takes little account of the variation of contacts within the two categories, especially in relation to the police role in a given situation, or of what Manning (2001) has termed the dramaturgies inherent in encounters between the police and the public. Who initiated a contact may often be less important than the issues at stake, the roles of the actors involved, and the symbols used by the police in managing and indeed manipulating the situation (ibid: 317). That said, other approaches have been tried, and these generally confirm that a dichotomous approach, while not perfect, is a good enough 'fit' to the variety of police-public interactions to be useful. For example, in their report of the first British Crime Survey Southgate and Ekblom (1984) divided contacts into adversarial and consumer categories. Although this categorization meant that reports of traffic accidents and 'other' contacts had to be excluded as ambiguous, 97 per cent of contacts initiated by the public were classed as consumer related, while 86 per cent of those initiated by the police were classed as adversarial (ibid: 5).

Mapping contact with the police

There are two main strands of investigation to be considered when thinking about the distribution of public contacts with the police. The first is those contacts which occur between police and what might be called 'suspect populations' (Maguire 2003) – the socially marginal or excluded, ethnic minority and working class youth and, of course, 'career' criminals – and those, often the same people, who are repeatedly victimised. It is these groups which have, unsurprisingly, been the focus of much criminological research, especially that concerning the problems faced by ethnic minority groups. It has long been established that Black people, and those from minority ethnic groups more generally, are disproportionately represented at most if not all stages within the criminal justice system in general (Jefferson 1992; Reiner 1992; Smith 1997), and by police stop and search activity

in particular (Norris, Fielding et al. 1992; Bowling and Philips 2002). There is overwhelming evidence that police racism is at least partially to blame for this (Norris, Fielding et al. 1992; Holdaway 1997; Bowling and Philips 2002; 2003; 2007).

The second strand of investigation concerns the population as a whole, something far less prominent in the literature. So, for example, the 2004/05 BCS found that 22 per cent of all adults had had some kind of police-initiated contact in the past year; 10 per cent had been stopped in a vehicle. With regard to this last type of contact, men were more likely to have been stopped than women, younger people more likely than older, and those from Mixed, Asian and Black ethnic groups more likely than those from the White (Allen, Edmonds et al. 2006). The patterns for foot stops were broadly similar, and these findings conform very much to established views of who is targeted by the police. This is less true for other findings, however. The chance of being stopped in a car *increased* with household income, while there was relatively little variation by socio-economic classification (although those from semi-routine and routine classes, and the never worked, were slightly more likely to have been stopped on foot) (ibid.).

The BCS findings therefore broadly concur with the idea that certain groups of people are more likely to experience contact with the police. In terms of an investigation into the effect of contact on confidence this implies that people from these groups may, on the basis of their different experiences, have different views of the police. But the picture is not entirely straightforward. Using a dataset which combined BCS data for London only with their own Policing for London Survey, FitzGerald et al. (2002) found that aside from the obvious fact that owning a car was the single biggest predictor of experiencing a car stop, net of other factors being male, aged under 30 and black were the factors most predisposing to experiencing a car or foot stop (ibid: 62). On the other hand, setting aside having been a victim of crime, having experienced a car stop and coming from a middle class household were the single factors most associated with seeking contact. While these data suggest it is generally the case that public contact with the police is concentrated disproportionally among men, the young and ethnic minority groups (especially the Black groups) other, perhaps more surprising characteristics are associated also with contact and perhaps, therefore, the effects of such contact on confidence.

The impact of personal experience on confidence and police legitimacy

The account above briefly outlined the history of public confidence in the police (a subject covered in more depth in the first empirical paper of this thesis) and the contours of police-public interaction. But what of the relationship between the two? The remainder of this conceptual review is taken up by a discussion of the potential impact of contact on confidence. It also serves to sketch out some of the ways which individual's encounters with officers are situated, both socially and normatively, within wider contexts.

It is a central finding from much extant work that the net impact of contact on confidence is negative – levels of trust and support for the police appear to be lower among those who have had recent personal contact with officers (FitzGerald, Hough et al. 2002; Walker, Flatley et al. 2009). In England and Wales at least this may be an issue unique to the police: personal experience has been found to have only a marginal impact on opinions of the Criminal justice system as a whole (Van de Walle 2009). Unsurprisingly, the negative impact of contact on confidence appears to be largely down to dissatisfaction with the way police deal with people (Skogan 2006). But what is it that creates such dissatisfaction? What do people want from their encounters with the police? There is considerable evidence from UK studies that the public approach their encounters with the police with what on one level is a pragmatic or realistic stance: people do not appear to place great emphasis on a 'result' (Newburn and Merry 1990; FitzGerald, Hough et al. 2002). They do, however, want to be treated fairly and with dignity and respect, for the police to appear interested and concerned, and to be provided with information about what is occurring (Newburn and Merry 1990; Skogan 1996; 2006). These findings are mirrored in a number of US studies (Tyler and Huo 2002; Skogan and Frydl 2004; Reisig, Bratton et al. 2007; Tyler and Fagan 2008), and of course resonate with the ideas of procedural justice as outlined above. In sum, much available evidence suggests that if contact experiences are to influence trust and confidence, or police legitimacy, this is likely to be more through the quality of personal treatment than via the attainment of material outcomes.

Can contact enhance confidence?

A key feature of the procedural justice model is that it envisages the effects of contact on trust, confidence and legitimacy to operate in both positive and negative directions. While police behaviour that is judged to be unfair has a negative effect on police legitimacy, the (demonstrable) use of fair processes has an equivalent positive effect (Tyler and Fagan 2008). However, these is a second, much looser set of theoretical orientations to which has

a quite different emphasis; namely, that the unique nature of the police function (and of the police itself) means that personal contact is unlikely to lead to enhanced legitimacy, while there are many circumstances in which it might be damaged. Approaches which might be loosely categorised as 'asymmetric' have stressed that because of the peculiar network of power relations, status relations, previous expectations and result orientations which surround any encounter between police officers and the public, negative outcomes in terms of trust, confidence and legitimacy are far more likely than positive.

The notion of asymmetry in public responses to contact with the police is most closely associated with Wesley Skogan (2006). In large part the idea rests on an empirical observation that negatively assessed contacts (on whatever basis this assessment is made) have a negative impact on trust, confidence and legitimacy but positively assessed contacts have little or no positive effect. Skogan (2006: 105) cites a number of studies (Miller, Davies et al. 2004; Weitzer and Tuch 2004) in support of this idea, before going on to show in his own analysis, drawing on data from a number of US cities, London and St. Petersburg in Russia, that a marked asymmetry can indeed be discerned. Uplifts in trust and confidence from positive encounters are either entirely absent or far smaller than apparent downward effects from negative ones. Other US studies have broadly similar findings (Schafer, Huebner et al. 2003; Rosenbaum, Schuck et al. 2005).

Qualitative studies designed to access the views of marginalised or excluded groups have also tended to stress that negative impacts from contact on confidence appear more likely than positive. This is true both in the US (Brunson 2007; Carr, Napolitano et al. 2007) and the UK (Sharp and Atherton 2007). Such research has stressed the importance of generalised orientations toward the police in judgement formation, orientations perhaps derived from backgrounds in groups with histories of antagonistic relations but also, importantly, from personal histories of repeated negative contacts. These are often police-initiated (classically, stops and searches) and may create among those who repeatedly experience them a deep-seated mistrust, fear or dislike of the police.

There are a huge range of potential explanations for asymmetry. Skogan himself makes the observation that pre-existing ideas or the extent of police legitimacy among the public shapes how people interpret their experiences. The social, cultural and emotional orientations and feelings individuals bring to an encounter with the police may have a determining role in how they interpret both process and outcome, and may well result in an

asymmetry in judgements about contacts. For example, positive encounters may not lead to improved overall assessments because they were either expected (by those with previously positive views about the police) or viewed as one-off freak occurrences (among those with previously negative views) (Reisig and Chandek 2001; Weitzer and Tuch 2004). Rosenbaum et al (2005) discuss similar findings (that pre-existing dispositions are more important than assessments of contacts in predicting overall attitudes toward the police) in terms of confirmation bias, that is, a tendency to interpret actions and situations in ways which confirm existing beliefs. Finally, the characteristics of the officers involved may also affect how encounters are 'read'. There is some evidence from the United States, for example, that Black Americans are more likely to experience police actions as legitimate if the officers involved are also Black (Theobold and Haidar-Markel 2008). Given the well know disparities in the representativeness of the British police this could, if replicated on this side of the Atlantic, be another factor underlying overall asymmetry.

Approaches which echo the procedural justice model can also suggest asymmetry. The police continue to represent law, order and nation (Loader 1999; Loader and Mulcahy 2003) to many people, standing for "a (largely mythical) national culture of order, harmony and restraint" (Reiner 1992: 779). Encounters may therefore be experienced through this lens, and the way officers treat (or are perceived to treat) a person may contain powerful messages about their place or role in society and their relationship with the governing social order. Assessments of police performance, and how these feed into police legitimacy, may therefore depend not only on the individual's understanding of the police role in a given situation, but also on their relationship with the particular social order represented by the police and their orientation toward both it and the police as its representatives.

However Skogan (2006) also notes that the 'classic' studies of police-public contacts in the US did suggest that positive encounters could have a small positive impact (for example Dean 1980), and other more recent works have also shown that positive impacts may be forthcoming. Reisig and Parks (2000) found a moderately strong symmetry in the effect of satisfaction with calls to police, while Schuck and Rosenbaum (2005) found a symmetry of effect from encounters which occurred in the neighbourhood on opinions of the local police. Somewhat symmetrical patterns have also been observed in the UK (Tendayi Viki, Culmer et al. 2006). Vicarious experiences, the stories told to people by others about their contacts with the police, may also have a markedly more symmetrical impact on opinions

(Rosenbaum, Schuck et al. 2005), although Miller *et al.* (2004) contradict this, finding that only negative vicarious experiences were siginificant.

Other work has suggested that increased police activity in the local area can result in enhanced trust and confidence. A Home Office evaluation of the NRPP found that trust and confidence was higher in sites where the scheme – which involved increased police visibility and involvement with the public – had been implemented than it was in control sites (Tuffin, Morris et al. 2006). To sum up, then, while it seems that in almost every case negative effects outweigh the positive, the case for symmetry may have been overplayed. In some situations and in some circumstances asymmetry may be less prevalent than Skogan suggests, and contacts which are handled well by the police may result in uplifts to trust and confidence.

Finally, for those who have many contacts with the police the *cumulative impact* of many, perhaps minor, encounters may be very important, as minor incivilities from officers (or, perhaps, more serious transgressions) stack up and take on an importance far greater than the nature of any one encounter might suggest (Brunson and Miller 2006; Brunson 2007). A negative cumulative history of contacts may make it more likely that any given encounter will not be assessed mainly in terms of what occurred 'on the day', but in the light of this history. This effect will be particularly important for those from backgrounds or communities with histories of negative or confrontational relationships with the police, most obviously some ethnic minority groups (Sharp and Atherton 2007) and young people, especially those form working class or disadvantaged backgrounds (Loader 1996; McAra and McVie 2005). Similar patterns have of course been observed in the US, where the history of police relations with socially marginal or excluded groups is if anything even worse (Hurst, Frank et al. 2000; Brunson and Miller 2006; Brunson 2007; Carr, Napolitano et al. 2007), and compounded by the apparently widespread use by police of ethnic and racial profiling (Tyler and Wakslak 2004; Harris 2006). For such groups it is possible to talk about a significant loss of legitimacy, the development of *distrust* of the police as an active concept, and even the existence of a minority or subcultural habitus which inculcates feelings of fear, anger and even hatred.

The broader context of police-public encounters

Work on the ways that police legitimacy was itself constructed over time and the factors which continue to affect its renegotiation today also contains implications for the potential

effects of personal experience. As Barker (2001) reminds us, the activities of institutions in legitimating themselves are a key component of all relationships between authorities and those they govern, and the presentation and reception of such legitimation projects are important factors affecting not only high level discourse about the position of authorities, but also those mundane everyday encounters between, in this case, police and public, which may reflect back onto such projects.

Noting that the modern institution of the police was established in the face of bitter opposition, Reiner (2000: Chapter 2) traces convincingly the major components of the legitimation project undertaken first by the London Metropolitan Police and then across Great Britain as regional forces were established. These included a public (or self) presentation of the police which stressed a range of factors: bureaucratic organisation; emphasis on the rule of law; a strategy of minimal force; non-partisanship; accountability; the service role; preventive policing; and police effectiveness. The police legitimation project was vital in establishing and cementing the position of the British police; in particular, it could be argued, at the level of 'diffuse support'. Many of the legitimating strategies employed were important more at an ideological, even mythical, level than at that of everyday lived reality. They painted a picture of an ideal police force, often far removed from the organisation itself. It is perhaps for this very reason that face to face contact, confronting ideology and myth with actual experience, has such potent implications for people's ideas about the police.

But at the level of 'specific support' there seems to be much to suggest that direct contact might undermine components of the legitimation project, and many potential reasons for such effects can be traced in Reiner's narrative of the rise and decline of police legitimacy. To take just two examples, one key strategy was an emphasis on the standardisation of training and discipline. The dominant image was to be of a uniform, and uniformed, force or service which was able to treat all those with whom it came into contact with equal skill and dedication. This is plainly an impossible remit to fulfil – different levels of ability, aptitude and commitment among officers means that it will always be the case that different people (and different groups of people) will receive different levels of service, and will over time become aware of this. A second strategy was promotion of the idea that everyone is treated the same under the law: but is impossible for the police, on a day to day basis, to follow the rule of law to the letter. Indeed the very concept of police discretion mitigates against a full application of the law, since it presupposes that different circumstances merit

different responses. It seems inevitable that direct contact with the police will in at least some instances challenge the idea that they are fair and unbiased arbitrators of the law. In both cases, the best which can occur from personal contact is reconfirmation of established trust, confidence and legitimacy, while there are many opportunities for the image of the police, and therefore trust and confidence, to be undermined (so we are here right back at the idea of asymmetry).

Such threats notwithstanding, the course of the legitimation project described by Reiner may still underpin at least some aspects of police legitimacy. Other more recent police activities and strategies may be equally important. The continuing stream of scandals concerning corruption, internal racism, evidence tampering and brutality is one, which, while not as strong as it was once, can still be found in press and media reports. The high profile difficulties of Ian Blair (Laville 2008) and, before him, other officers, must also impinge on the public consciousness, as of course do events such as the De Menezes shooting, the Forest Gate raid and the G20 protests. But not all police activities and policies which impact public opinion will do so entirely in negative ways. Operations directed at high profile issues, such as Operation Blunt with its emphasis on teenage knife-crime, may be popular, at least among those not likely to be caught in the nets such operations almost inevitably 'trawl' with (see also Bowling and Philips 2007; Laville 2009). And, of course, what else are policies such as the NRPP if not attempts, in part, to reaffirm or re-establish the police legitimacy?

Wider developments in society, perhaps presaged by late or liquid modernity (Bauman 2000b) or the triumph of neo-liberal economics, are also likely to have influence public perceptions of the police. Changing public orientations to the state and new problems for policing resulting from the processes of globalisation (Smith 2007b) are just two examples. Furthermore the effect of wider social change on attitudes to the police may operate prior to direct experience and may therefore influence how encounters are read – for example, the decline of deference (Miliband 1978) may predispose people to be more questioning and critical of police actions. Others have pointed to the implications of 'New Public Management' (NPM) for policing and in particular for the reproduction of police legitimacy (Hough 2003; Martin 2003; Hough 2004; 2007b). The NPM emphasis on targets is thought to be particularly problematic in a police context, particularly if this occurs in a 'top-down' manner and police come to be seen as less responsive to local demands and issues and more remote and centrally controlled (Hough 2007b).

Bringing it all together

It is likely then that a large number of factors might come together to influence how individuals 'read' encounters with the police, what messages they take from them, and how these factors are implicated in wider sets of concerns Two concrete examples of how structures of feeling about the police can integrate into predispositions toward and judgements about personal contacts are provided by qualitative accounts from the UK, and these may serve as a useful summary of much of what has been said. Girling, Loader and Sparks (2000) note that frustrations among those generally supportive of the police can be triggered by higher expectations of what they can achieve, expectations themselves linked to a general (and, the authors suggest, sentimental) attachment or identification with the police as representatives of a certain social and moral order. It may be that in some cases a high level of support for the police can lead directly to a greater propensity for dissatisfaction with contacts. Furthermore, Girling *et al.* discuss the policing of motoring as a site through which latent tensions between the modern middle classes and the police are played out. The policing of the roads, and motorists especially, is one of the key points through which 'ordinary, law-abiding citizens' come into contact with the police on occasions when they themselves are the objects of police suspicion, and there is much to suggest that this experience challenges and upsets those who would place themselves in this group. Traffic policing is seen as a waste of time and a misuse of resources, while traffic offences are not seen as real crimes:

> "...traffic policing is unsettling because it offends against many (middle class) people's sense of themselves as the proper recipients of police services, and jars unpleasantly with the sentiments of attachment and ownership they feel toward the police. The regulation of motorists serves ... to undermine the received (middle-class) idea that the English police belong to 'us', to be directed at 'them'." (ibid: 137)

On the other side of the coin, Loader (1996) discusses how accounts of bad policing are 'assembled' by young people from many fragments of experience, both of the self and of peers. These stories of bad policing are seemingly both widespread and long-lasting, and have concrete impacts on the ways young people view, and therefore interact with, the police. For example, 'horror' stories of police violence speak directly to concerns about *routine*, local policing, giving meaning to something which is experienced as arbitrary and capricious. Negative perceptions among young people about the way in which they are

policed – and consequently their position in relation to the police and their place within the social order – become embedded and likely to colour any interactions they have with the police.

Summary of the conceptual review

In this review I first outlined definitions of trust, confidence and legitimacy, and discussed these concepts in relation to the study of public perceptions of the police. In particular I developed the idea that the legitimacy of the police is multi-layered. There is a higher level, which attaches primarily to the police institution, for which diffuse support remains strong and which is in many ways is emergent from the structures of modern life. But there is also a lower level of legitimacy, which attaches to the police organisation, for which specific support is both weaker and more open to short term change. I then introduced the concept of procedural justice, noting among other things that it offers a powerful explanatory tool for understanding how trust can lead to legitimacy and also for locating encounters with, and opinions of, the police in a much broader social context.

After touching on existing knowledge about levels of trust and confidence, and rates and types of contact with the police, the review went on to examine the ways in which personal contact might affect trust, confidence and legitimacy. A contrast was drawn between the predictions of the procedural justice model and the idea of 'asymmetry'. The former predicts opinions of the police can be improved as well as damaged by the experience of direct contact, while the latter suggests it is very difficult to enhance opinions and very much easier to damage them. But notions of procedural justice and asymmetry also share many similarities. Above all, the potential importance of face-to-face contact for police-public relations is underlined. Equally, the individual's relationships with what the police represent, as well as general psychological and social orientations, can have extremely important implications for the way personal experiences are interpreted. The effect of contact on confidence cannot be separated from the broader social context in which if occurs.

OVERVIEW OF THE EMPIRICAL COMPONENT

The substantive component of this submission comprises five papers, both single and jointly-authored, which have either already been published in peer-reviewed journals or are presented as if ready for submission to such. This short section will briefly outline these papers, chiefly with regard to the ways in which they address the overall aims of the thesis as outlined above. The first three address primarily the first strand of the thesis, being concerned with the point of contact between police and public, levels of trust and confidence, and the idea of procedural justice as it applies to contact and confidence. The last two papers concentrate predominantly on the second strand, being concerned more with the meaning of police in people's lives and the place they grant it in wider structures of feeling and thought. The broader ideas of Tyler's model run through all five, being especially prominent in papers two, three and five. Taken together the studies suggest an hourglass analysis structure, starting with some very broad and general historical patterns, then zooming in on contact, and specific forms of contact, before broadening out again to examine aspects of public confidence and how they are built up and finally linking experience, trust and legitimacy in a cohesive whole.

Paper one, *Convergence, not divergence? Public contact and confidence in the police in 20 years of the British Crime Survey*, addresses the basic issues – rates of contact with the police, levels of public confidence, and the relationship between the two – that underpin much of what follows. It does so through an historical prism, using data from 20 years of the British Crime Survey to assess developments over time. As the title suggests, converging, or at least not diverging, patterns of experience are noted across two key social axes, age and ethnicity. In essence, variation in rates of contact with the police and 'overall' levels of confidence have decreased across people of different ages, while the opinions of the White ethnic majority have moved closer to those of people from ethnic minority groups. At the same time, the effect of personal experience (contact) on opinions of the police seems to have grown slightly over time. These findings, while they do not directly contradict ideas about the postmodern nature of both public orientations toward the police and the nature of police practice itself, cast something of a new light on notions of the fragmentation of opinion in the late or post-modern era (Vaughan 2007). But perhaps more importantly in terms of this thesis, they demonstrate the continued, even growing, relevance of personal experience in opinion formation.

This theme is picked up and elaborated in papers two and three. *Contact and confidence: Revisiting the impact of public encounters with the police* (co-authored with Jonathan Jackson and Elizabeth A. Stanko and published in the March 2009 edition of *Policing and Society*), uses Skogan's (2006) idea of asymmetry as the starting point for an investigation of the extent, nature and impact of contact with the police. Data from the London Metropolitan Police's Public Attitudes Survey from 2005/06 and 2006/07 are used, and basic questions about the distribution of contact with the police are again addressed. But the paper goes much further, using disaggregated measures of trust – covering opinions of police effectiveness, fairness and community engagement – to show that while a strong asymmetry is certainly present it is not total. That is, while negative contacts are strongly associated with more negative opinions, positive contacts do have a small but significant association with more positive assessments. The third study also presents preliminary evidence suggesting that personal contacts with the police do appear to be judged in line with the predictions of the procedural justice model. Furthermore, it appears that any enhancements to overall confidence resulting from personal experience are likely to flow through assessments of the fairness and engagement of the police, not through opinions about its effectiveness.

The third paper comprises the fullest investigation into the predictions of Tyler's model possible with the data available for this research. *The quality of police contact: procedural justice concerns among victims of crime in London* tests some of the central propositions of the procedural justice model: that process will be valued over outcome; that fair treatment enhances confidence; and that procedural fairness is associated with increased decision acceptance. Data from a large scale sample of recent crime victims in London are used, and confirming evidence is found in all three cases. The potential explanatory power of the procedural justice model in the UK is amply demonstrated, in particular with regard to positive outcomes not only in terms of confidence but in relation to decision acceptance as well. This paper also utilises the notions of 'diffuse' and 'specific' support (Easton 1975) in an attempt to initiate consideration of the ways in which different levels or types of support for the police can interact with personal experience. It also outlines how such different levels or types of support for the police may be both empirically located and related to some of the key theoretical concerns of this thesis, in particular Bourdieu's concept of habitus.

The fourth paper, *Crime, Policing and Social Order: On the Expressive Nature of Public Confidence in Policing* (co-authored with Jonathan Jackson and published in the September 2009 edition of the *British Journal of Sociology*) places less emphasis on personal experiences of the police *per se* and more on the wider social and social-psychological context of public experiences of police and policing. Two models of confidence are tested. The first 'instrumental' model would hold that opinions are largely based on the ability of the police to do its job – deliver security, reduce crime, and so forth. The second 'expressive' model would hold that opinions of the police draw much more heavily on assessments of social cohesion, local disorder and a narrative of community break-down. The data presented (drawn from both the BCS and a local survey conducted in London) are strongly supportive of the second model. It seems that the police, as a 'proto-typical group representative' (Sunshine and Tyler 2003b), is held accountable for social and even economic changes (indicated by perceived declines in cohesion and order) which are far outside its traditional scope of interest and control. Questions of the broader affective meaning of the police come to the fore, in particular its association with the nation/state/community nexus. But the congruence between expressive general influences on confidence and those factors which people find important during face-to-face contacts is also worth noting. In both cases, instrumental concerns appear to be of much less importance.

The final paper – *Public cooperation with the police: Social control and the reproduction of police legitimacy* (again co-authored with Jonathan Jackson) – provides in some ways a summation. It combines analysis of the underlying 'drivers' of confidence in the police with consideration of how different aspects of confidence, views about the procedural fairness, community engagement and effectiveness, lead through to a concrete measure of police legitimacy, survey respondent's stated propensities to contact and support the police. This latter is taken to relate to the expressed consent that Beetham (1991) positions as a central component of legitimacy. Data from a local survey mounted in seven London wards are used to demonstrate associations between concerns about general and local social decline and trust in the police which are consistent with those discussed in paper four. But, intriguingly, some measures of concern about social decline are positively associated with the measure of legitimacy. As much as trust may be damaged when people see disorder and social decline, police legitimacy may be enhanced by the same processes, perhaps because people turn to the police institution at times of perceived need. Equally, however, the role of active assessments of police fairness and community engagement, in particular, are

underlined. Police legitimacy is therefore located within a complex structure of emotions and experiences which appears to draw on and react to exactly the notions of shared group membership and police representivity which both the procedural justice model and recent British sociological accounts insist are central to the relationship between police and public.

PAPER ONE

Convergence, not divergence? Public contact and confidence in the police in 20 years of the British Crime Survey

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Abstract

Public trust and confidence is vital if the police is to be effective and represent and serve those under its jurisdiction. The police rely on public support for the fulfilment of almost all functions, and the public has a right to expect that police actions are in tune with its priorities. There has been much comment and debate about the apparent decline in trust and confidence in the British police since the 1950s, most frequently evidenced by data from the British Crime Survey and other survey sources. Yet, there has been relatively little in-depth interrogation of the survey data. This is surprising, given current policing policies that are in many ways focused on improving trust and confidence. This paper pools data from 11 sweeps of the British survey – from 1984 to 2005/06 – to demonstrates that trends in trust and confidence, and experiences of face-to-face encounters with the police, suggest a homogenisation of experience and opinion over time. This pattern is found across two key variables, age and ethnicity, and differs from analyses which emphasise the increasingly diffuse and variable nature of public experiences of the police. In contrast, the apparent impact of contact on confidence appears to have grown. Findings are discussed in light of the individualization theories of Ulrich Beck and Zygmunt Bauman, with some concluding thoughts about implications for policing practise.

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Introduction

The British police embody distinct and potentially conflictual relationships between citizen and state that, nonetheless, are also complementary. Police officers are the 'thin blue line' protecting the public from crime and the first port of call at times of crisis. But they are also the 'state on the streets' (Hinton 2006), invoking images of nation, state and community which individuals may embrace, ignore, or reject. Whichever is the case, public opinions of the police, interactions with officers as representatives of institution *and* organisation, and the interpretation of such interactions are all key issues affecting police-public relations. Trust and confidence in, and the legitimacy of, the police are thought to be crucial not only for the service itself and its ability to do its job (Hough 2003), but also for broader compliance with the law (Tyler 1990; Tyler and Huo 2002) and even for the claims of the modern state to both represent and protect its citizens (Habermas 1979; Loader 2006).

There are two important, and contrasting, accounts of the historical trajectory of trust and confidence in the British police. According to the first account, trust and confidence has been declining since the 'golden age' of the 1950s (Reiner 2000: 48). During this halcyon period the police stood almost unchallenged not only as protectors of law and order but also as moral representatives of both community and nation (although see Weinberger 1995 for an account which cautions against nostalgia). The fifty years since then have witnessed an ever-increasing level of debate and contest around police actions and policies that has at times spilled over into violent conflict on the streets. Analyses of this process foreground problematic relationships between police and the socially marginal or excluded, particularly teenagers and ethnic minority groups (Hall et al 1978; Gilroy 1985; Keith 1993; Loader 1996; Reiner 2000). Opinions of the police have also declined among the general population (Jannson 2008). Above all, perhaps, this is a story of desacralisation and disenchantment as a wide variety of processes – the economic and social changes bought about in general by the course of late modernity and in particular by the more recent ascendancy of neo-liberalism – combined to knock the police off the pedestal which it once occupied (Reiner 2000; Newburn 2003).

The second account, while not completely at odds with the first, stresses a certain continuity in feelings of affect toward, indeed ownership of, the police among certain sections of the population (Loader and Mulcahy 2003). The onward march of modernity – or the onset of post-modernity – may well have created challenges to the police through the diversification of society, the decline of deference, and changes in the political economy of the United Kingdom. But Loader and Mulcahy argue that these changes may also have triggered a *growing*, or at least will have sustained, identification with the police,

particularly among those who turn to it as a symbol of stability as much as law and order in an increasingly disorientating and apparently threatening world. This account finds resonance with studies which have highlighted the extent to which support for the police is as bound up with concerns about disorder and social cohesion as it is with crime *per se* (Jackson and Sunshine 2007, Jackson *et al.* 2009). On this account the extent of any overall decline in trust and confidence is questioned, and attention drawn to the relatively high levels of support for the police found in the British Crime Survey (BCS) and elsewhere, especially when compared to opinions about other institutions such as government, press or the courts.

Threaded through both stories is a third and complementary analysis, which again refers to wider contexts of individuation, globalization, and neo-liberal economics, highlighting an increasingly consumerist orientation toward the police (Morgan and Newburn 1997; Loader 1999; Jones and Newburn 2002). Further, at least partly in response to a growing realisation that it cannot 'conquer' crime (Loader 1999), the police itself has attempted a process of demystification, repositioning itself as another mundane institution of government and manager of the crime problem rather than ultimate guardian of law and order (Reiner 2000: 378). However there is resistance to this process from those sections of the public who continue to see the police in symbolic terms (Loader 1999). For some people at least feelings toward the police run much deeper than attempts to 'rebrand' it as just another public service can accommodate (Girling *et al.* 2000; Loader and Mulcahy 2003).

This paper seeks to examine the empirical underpinnings of some of these ideas and debates. In particular it queries the extent of any decline in trust and confidence in the police not simply in overall terms, but in relation to specific social groups. This is not just a matter of more accurate description: by examining the decline in more detail possible causes can be interrogated. Changes in personal experiences of the police are discussed as a matter of interest in their own right and because they cast light on overall trust and confidence. The data presented support the notion that trust and confidence has continued to decline overall since the early 1980s. But more important is the nature of this change. Across two of the most important axes of police-public relations, age and ethnicity, there has been a marked levelling down in opinions, as those groups with hitherto more favourable views have experienced the greatest level of (downward) change over time. This development is mirrored by an increased salience of personal experience in the formation of overall views. These patterns have significant implications for some common

themes in the current theorising of policing, namely those which emphasise increasing diversity and fragmentation in experiences of and opinions about the police.

Policing and the late-modern condition

Newburn (2003) identifies four major trends in policing since 1945 that bring together many of the ideas outlined above. First, the role of the police has expanded, or at least become more complex. Second, the image of the police has changed, has been challenged, and legitimacy has declined: the nature of the relationship between police and community has altered. Third, a gulf exists between the police and some ethnic minority communities, and Newburn identifies policing diversity as set to become one of the key themes in the coming years. Fourth, and in some ways in summation, there is an increased reflexivity in public dealings with the police:

> "We are now more critical of policing and the police. We ask for more yet, given the greater visibility of the belly of the beast, feel we receive less" (ibid: 102)

Diversity, reflexivity and growing consumerism in orientations toward the police are all elements indicative of wider changes in society often (but not always) described as late- or post-modern. Implications arising from this condition have been discussed regarding public reactions to police and policing (Smith 2007a; Loader 1999); to the activity of policing itself (Reiner 1992; Newburn 2003); the state of and change in policing policy and practise (De Lint 1999); and efforts to re-establish police legitimacy and provide security for all in increasingly plural societies (Smith 2007a; Vaughan 2007; Wood and Dupont 2006). Official documents sometimes follow similar lines – a Home Office report from the late 1990s, for example, recommends 'segmented' policing, distinct styles of policing for different population groups or 'publics' (Bradley 1998). Such accounts highlight the increasing fragmentation of the social world wrought by the advent of post-industrial society, the exponential growth in communication networks, and breakdown in old certainties of gender role, class and other over-arching structures. A growing consumerist attitude toward the police is but one outcome held to emerge from these changes. Another is the growing diversity and reflexivity in opinions about policing identified by Newburn, coupled with the generation of multiple conceptualisations of what the police are for and should do. The idea, in essence, is that over time support for the police has become more fractured, less coherent, more variable within and between groups, and more febrile.

However there is another trend in social theory which highlights different societal-level processes (or rather different consequences arising from the same processes), exemplified best by the work of Zygmunt Bauman and Ulrich Beck (Beck 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Bauman 2002; 2005; 2007). While not denying the increasing diversity and plurality of the social world, these accounts point to underlying, or at least countervailing, processes of homogenisation. These arise most importantly from the interacting phenomena of individualization, globalization, and consumerism. Indeed the very processes that generate homogenisation of experience, or which 'flatten-out' the life-world of hitherto distinct groups of people, may be those which also create an increasing diversity of identity which, it is held, requires different 'types' of policing. Those disoriented by rapid and confusing social change may cling to existing imagined communities of nation and state (Anderson 1983), create new ones for themselves on-line, or reify ethnic and religious affiliations. The impact of globalisation looms large in Bauman's account, although the processes involved are not inevitably homogenising but may be an active in creating new forms of experience and difference (Appadurai 1996). The individualization which accompanies and interacts with globalization creates societies where:

> "... everyone *must* be individuals; (and) in this respect, at least, members of such a society are anything but individual, different or unique. They are, on the contrary, strikingly like each other in that they must follow the same life strategy and use shared – commonly recognisable and legible – tokens to convince others that they are doing so" (Bauman 2005: 16, emphasis in original).

This strand of social theory suggests change in work patterns and the use of public space (for example) may mean that the everyday experiences of diverse groups of people are more similar now than they were in the past. Everyone is charged with 'making' themselves in a globalised, individualised market place: inherited or generational orientations or beliefs are of decreasing salience, the life course loses some or much of its old structure, and gender roles and orientations become blurred. These and other aspects of the late-modern condition may have implications for police-public relations of a similar magnitude to those heralded by 'post-modernity'. Most importantly they might predict not a *divergence* of experience and opinion, as diversity increases, but a *convergence,* as changing patterns of work, leisure and consumption bring hitherto dissimilar groups of people together, in terms of experience, or temporally and spatially, if not emotionally. This may have profound implications for the public opinions of the police.

Such processes may be identified in Garland's (2001) vision of the relocation of crime – and thus, possibly, personal experience of the police – from being something which affected mainly the poor to something that touches the lives of almost everyone. The culture of control is founded in part on the reactions of middle-class and other groups to the increased salience of crime in their everyday lives. Similarly, it has been recognised that the growth in car use over the last 50 years has multiplied the number of 'confrontational' encounters between police and middle class groups which hitherto had little experience of such, and that this has been particularly problematic for relations between police and those groups who may have previously considered the police 'perfect' (Girling *et al.* 2000; Smith 2007a).

Mediated experiences of the police have also multiplied. Taking just one example, police themselves now spend considerable amounts of time and money communicating with the public in indirect ways, from leaflet drops (Hohl, Bradford and Stanko 2009) to inform people in about crime and police activity in their local area to placing adverts in national newspapers, for example to advertise the 'Policing Pledge' (Travis 2009). Such efforts may succeed in informing the public; they will also have increased awareness of police activities among those groups previously insulated from such knowledge, perhaps also working alongside dominant media tropes to spread the experience of crime far beyond those directly involved. Such direct communication may also be implicated in tensions between still dominant public perceptions of police as 'crime-fighters' and attempts by the police to reposition themselves as 'crime managers'.

Rather than support for the police becoming more fractured, then, perhaps a greater similarity of experience in the general population is linked to a greater similarity in opinions. Further, processes of individualization – and, indeed, of increasing reflexivity – may prompt not a fracturing of views but an homogenization, with people becoming, as Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) stress, more similar in their individuality. Hough (2003: 149) compares studies conducted in London in 1981 and 2000 and suggests that in the earlier year "white, middle-class, middle-aged" people had considerably more positive views of the police than, for example, young black Londoners. But by 2000 the views of the "middle majority" had moved towards those of socially and economically excluded groups.

Challenges for empirical analysis

A key finding presented by successive waves of the British Crime Survey (BCS) is the apparent decline in confidence in the local police over time (Bradford *et al.* 2009; Jansson

2008; Roberts and Hough 2005). In part, the importance of this finding revolves around how it is interpreted. For over 20 years BCS respondents were asked to rate the job their local police were doing on a four-point scale, with possible responses of 'very' and 'fairly' good, and 'fairly' and 'very' bad. A marked decline between 1984 and 2000 in those rating their local police as 'very good' have been used to support the idea of a "haemorrhage" in support for the police (Reiner 2000: 59), while, in contrast, others have pointed out that if responses of 'fairly good' are taken into account support remains high (Loader and Mulcahy 2003: 35).[1] However, Hough (2007: 71) notes that in many instances 'fairly good' is equivalent to 'don't know' or 'undecided'.

Given the importance of this issue – partly in response to the apparent decline, this question, or one like it, has increasingly been inserted in police-performance target regimes (Bradford *et al.* 2009) – there has been surprisingly little in-depth analysis of it over the years. This may have been in part due to academic scepticism about the value of single indicator questions. However recent work has suggested that while trust and confidence in the police is certainly complex and multi-faceted such summary questions in fact access overall opinions relatively well, and that when providing answers survey respondents take into account their views across a number of areas - police effectiveness, fairness, and level of engagement with the community for example (Bradford *et al.* 2008; Jackson *et al.* 2009). Responses to the 'good job' question may well provide a meaningful summation of public opinion, and the more detailed work which has been undertaken suggests it is ideas about fairness and community engagement that have the greatest weight in 'overall' opinions.

A further reluctance to undertake in-depth analysis may have been a lack of questions in the BCS (certain years excepted) that address the reasons behind overall views. There are four potential sources of, or influences on, opinions about the police: personal and vicarious experience; the media in its broadest sense (not just news but books, film and so on – Mawby 2002; McLaughlin 2007; Reiner 2003); the actions and activities of the police themselves (Reiner 2000); and broader attitudinal orientations, for example those which change over time because of reactions to political developments, responses to growing perceptions of disorder and the breakdown in values (Jackson and Sunshine 2007; Jackson et al. 2009), and indeed some of the social processes outlined above. Of these, personal experience is by far the best represented in most waves of the BCS, and furthermore is known to have significant effects on people's views. Those who have had recent contact with the police, particularly unsatisfactory contact, have on average lower levels of trust

[1] Trust and confidence in the police has been ticking up in recent years (see for example Nicholas and Flatley 2008), although levels are still well below those of two decades ago.

and confidence (Allen *et al.* 2006; Bradford *et al.*, 2009; Skogan 2006). More contested is a positive impact on trust and confidence or legitimacy from personal contacts which are judged satisfactory by the public (Bradford *et al.* 2009; Tyler and Fagan 2008).

In light of everything above, this paper represents an initial attempt at in-depth analysis of change over time in both opinions and experiences of the police. Analysis proceeds on two fronts. Firstly, opinions among people of different ages and from different ethnic groups are considered. Young people and those from ethnic minority groups have long had particularly problematic relationships with the police (Hall *et al.* 1978; Smith 1983; Loader 1996; Bowling and Philips 2002; FitzGerald et al. 2002; McAra and McVie 2005; Sharp and Atherton 2007), underlining the importance of investigating change in opinions according to age and ethnicity and suggesting that any variation is likely to be particularly marked across these categories. Secondly, personal contact, and assessments of it, will be key variables, providing a concrete source of or influence on opinions.

Many factors will have influenced police-public relations across the axis of ethnicity. From the use of 'sus' laws in the 1970s and early 80s to target young Black men through to the disastrous handling of the Stephen Lawrence murder inquiry and its continued fall out, relationships between police and many sections of the Black community have been particularly difficult. More recently, the terrorist attacks in New York in 2001 and London in 2005 have presaged changes in the relationship between police and British Asians, Muslim or otherwise. But relationships between the police and the majority White British population are unlikely to have been static. There are a number of possible trajectories but underlying causes are likely to centre on those structures of feeling (Williams 1964; c.f. Loader and Mulcahy 2003) which position the police as key representatives of state, nation and community. These associations are likely to be particularly prevalent among the majority population, significant sections of which hark back to the 1950s (and a police force of the imagination) as a high point in national, and therefore social, cohesion (Girling *et al.* 2000). It may be that trust and confidence among the White group has been buffered because of the position of the police in these structures of feeling. However change may have been particularly keenly felt by those adhering to these ideas as old certainties, indeed past glories, have been swept away by modernity (Giddens 1991). The police, as archetypal representatives of the nation/state, may have been particularly affected by its perceived failure to provide security and stability, such that declines in trust and confidence have been greater among those who in the past held the police in the highest regard (Girling *et al.* 2000; Jackson and Sunshine 2007; Jackson et al. 2009).

Turning to age, it is well documented in Home Office reports (for example Allen *et al.* 2006) that older people have on average more favourable views of the police. Even if a process of disenchantment has occurred older people, bought up at a time when views of the police were much more favourable, may have been insulated from it to some extent. Further, the reservoirs of support for the police which Girling *et al.* describe might be expected to be stronger among older people, arguably particularly disorientated by social change and thus more ready to cling to the police as representatives of law, order and stability. But, again, contradictory processes may be at work: older people, alive at a time when 80 per cent of people rated the English police the 'best in the world' (Home Office 1962, quoted in Loader and Mulcahy 2003: 4) may be particularly affected by negative experiences or stories, resulting in *greater* comparative falls in confidence. Younger people may in contrast be immune from such disenchantment since they have primarily experienced what Reiner (2000: 47) has called "post-legitimacy". This is characterised as the most recent historical period in which the police, despite having survived the legitimation crises of the 1970s and 1980s and retaining a residual or baseline level of support, are now just one among a number of public services, not an embodiment of order.

Data and Measures

A dataset which combines 11 sweeps of the BCS, 1984 to 2005/06 is used here. The data were pooled by combining separate data-files for each BCS sweep into one SPSS file. The 1982 BCS was omitted from this process because it contained only very few questions of interest directly comparable with later years. The initial file obtained contained socio-demographic variables as well as those concerning victimisation, fear of crime, and perceptions of disorder. To this was subsequently added variables concerning contact with the police and opinions of the police and the Criminal justice system.

While this dataset presents rich opportunities for the current task it also presents a number of difficulties. Most importantly, the questions used in the BCS have varied significantly over time. Pertinent questions entered the survey at various times; some were subsequently dropped, sometimes permanently. Question formats also changed, such that data from later years are not comparable with those from earlier. In the analyses which follow the timescales involved therefore vary, decisions about which survey years to include being based largely on the simple criteria of maximising the number utilised. However on some occasions other considerations were involved, for example if small sample sizes in some years made detailed analysis of some questions unsuitable. These decisions are usually implicit in the presentation rather than explicitly justified.

Of the key variables used here age – with the proviso that BCS data do not cover children aged under 16 – contact experiences and respondent's assessments of these (where available) presented no particular problems.[2] This was not the case however for ethnicity. The ethnic group questions used in the BCS developed over time from a simple White/Black/Asian/Other classification in 1984 through to adoption of the full 16 group 2001 Census classification (Office for National Statistics 2003). This means that comparisons by ethnic group over time are limited to the simplest classification used in the earliest period available. This is not entirely satisfactory since socio-economic variation and differences in cultural background within broad ethnic categories such as 'Black' are often greater than variation between that category and other similarly broad groupings ('White' or 'Asian') (Dobbs, Green and Zealey 2006). On the other hand, people's experiences of the police may be more influenced by their 'race' – and specifically police reactions to visible markers of ethnic difference such as skin colour – than their own self-assessed ethnicity. In order to maintain comparability, both internally and with other published sources which continue to concentrate on an Asian-Black-White comparison, the simplest classification is used here. These are not ethnic groups in the currently understood sense of the term, although for simplicity's sake they are referred to as such.

The key response variable is respondent's answers to the question 'How good a job are the local police doing' (with answers in a four point scale: very good; fairly good; fairly bad; very bad). This also presents challenges. As noted above answers to this question are ambiguous – does 'fairly good' represent a modest amount of approval, does it damn with faint praise, or does it really mean 'don't know'? The answer is probably something of all three. But the issue is further complicated by the fact that the indeterminacy of 'fairly good' might change over time. Does a shift from very to fairly good imply a very significant decline in support as suggested by some, or a much more modest change as suggested by others? This difficulty is largely sidestepped here, firstly by the use of 'very good' – the meaning of which might be expected to be relatively invariant over time – in bivariate analyses, and secondly by the use of ordinal logistic regression, which treats all four response categories as equidistant points on a scale (see Table 3 below). Movement up and down the scale is interpreted here as being straightforwardly associated with rises and falls in support. Finally, the item itself changed in 2003/04, and in later years a five category question was used which was not strictly comparable with earlier years. Because this

[2] As is common elsewhere (Skogan 2006), contacts with the police are divided here between those initiated by the member of the public involved (self-initiated) and those initiated by the police. Comparable and comprehensive questions about personal contacts were first included in the survey in 1988.

change coincided with the dropping of a number of questions on contact, much of the analysis stops at 2003/04 (after which time there appears in any case to have been relatively little change in overall trust and confidence – Bradford *et al.* 2009).

Setting the scene: trust and confidence in the police 1984 to 2003/04

The first task is to outline change in trust and confidence over time and across age and ethnicity. That there has been an overall pattern of relative decline from 1984 to around 2000, and a fairly constant picture since then, is well known (see Bradford et al. 2009; Jannson 2008). By way of summary Table 1 shows that 'strong support' for the police, the proportion of people rating the job done as 'very good', halved between 1984 and 2003/04 (falling from 31 per cent to 16 per cent). But more importantly, this decline was not uniform across different age groups: it was greater in the more elderly age groups and less, even absent in the younger (by this measure trust and confidence in the 16-24 age group *increased* slightly between 1994 and 2003/04). While in 1984 there was a strong gradation in opinions of the police by age by 2003/04 this had almost disappeared. Note also the timing of the greatest part of the decline. For those age 25-44, and arguably 45-54, it was between 1984 and 1994: for older people, and especially the eldest 75 plus age group, it was between 1994 and 2003/04.

In 1984, then, people in the older age groups retained considerably higher levels of 'strong' confidence than those in the younger groups. This gradient was still present in 1994, but between 1994 and 2003/04 levels of trust and confidence fell in the older groups to almost the same level as that found for younger age groups. Of course, the data shown in Table 1 need to be treated with caution. Those aged 55-64 in 1984 were not the same as those aged 55-64 in 1994; any apparent reduction in trust and confidence *within* age groups may be confounded by patterns *across* age groups. However the table can also be read across as well as down and change over time in the opinions of different cohorts can be tracked. For example, in 1984, 34 per cent of those aged 45-54 rated their local police as very good, as did 30 per cent of those aged 55-64 in 1994 – there was a decline of just 4 percentage points within the same cohort over the 10 years (note the shaded cells in the table). By 2003/04 only 18 per cent of the same cohort, now aged 65-74, gave a 'very good' rating, a decline of 12 percentage points which put them in a much more similar position to younger groups. Similar effects can be identified for the other older cohorts shown in the table. In contrast, opinions in the youngest cohort present across all years, aged 16-24 in 1984, remained fairly constant over time. The sense of a marked levelling down in views is reinforced. Perhaps higher levels of trust and confidence among older

people, and perhaps greater attachment to the police, initially provided some insulation from whatever caused the overall decline, but this eventually cracked, and when it did a rather steep fall was the result.

Table 1
Proportion of people rating their local police as 'very good'
England and Wales

	1984	1988	1994	2000	2003/2004
By age					
16-24	***20***	*14*	*12*	*12*	*16*
25-34	*21*	*16*	***16***	*16*	*16*
35-44	*29*	*21*	*21*	*17*	***17***
45-54	***34***	*28*	*23*	*20*	*15*
55-64	*39*	*29*	***30***	*22*	*16*
64-74	*43*	*34*	*35*	*27*	***18***
75 and over	*46*	*42*	*39*	*30*	*19*
By broad ethnic category					
White	*31*	*25*	*24*	*20*	*16*
Black	*25*	*16*	*17*	*19*	*20*
Asian	*34*	*18*	*22*	*17*	*19*
By police contact					
None	-	-	*24*	*20*	*16*
Satisfactory self-initiated	-	-	*28*	*24*	*23*
Unsatisfactory self-initiated	-	-	*8*	*5*	*4*
Satisfactory police-initiated	-	-	*27*	*23*	*22*
Unsatisfactory police-initiated	-	-	*9*	*9*	*6*
All people	*31*	*23*	*23*	*19*	*16*

Notes:

Data are from dataset combining all sweeps of the BCS from 1984 to 2005/06 and may differ slightly from those presented elsewhere.

Estimates for the Black and Asian groups in 1984 should be treated with caution due to small sample sizes.

Percentages calculated from total excluding 'Don't know' responses.

Source: British Crime Survey 1984; 1988; 1994; 2000; 2003/04

The pattern by broad ethnic category, also shown in Table 1, is more complex. Confidence appeared to decline steadily among the White group, but in contrast in the Black and Asian groups it fell sharply between 1984 and 1988 and then fluctuated after that. Most notably, however, confidence among these two minority ethnic 'groups' was at higher levels in 2003/04 than was the case among Whites. However in other aspects the message is rather similar to that for age. The biggest change in opinions over the whole 20 year period occurred in the group with the greatest confidence in the police in 1984, the White. Furthermore opinions appeared to be more homogenous in 2003/04 than they had been in 1984, with differences between groups significantly smaller.

Finally, and in contrast, the apparent impact of contact experiences on confidence appears to have grown slightly over time. In the earliest year shown those who reported satisfactory recent contact with the police held only slightly more favourable views than those who had had no contact, while those who reported unsatisfactory contact reported very much less favourable opinions. However, by 2003/04 the gaps between the 'satisfactory contact' and 'no contact' groups were somewhat larger, leading a greater variation in opinion. While there is perhaps a danger in over-interpreting these findings, there is a definite suggestion that the impact of (satisfactory) contact *grew* over time.

Personal contact with the police 1988 to 2005/06

So it appears that the overall decline in trust and confidence in the police, as measured by indications of firm support in the BCS, was most significant among those who previously held more favourable views. Further, views about the police according to age and ethnic group appear to be considerably more homogeneous in later periods than in earlier. What then does the story of personal contact with the police suggest with regard to these patterns? Personal experience is likely to be an important element in the formation of opinions about the police, and not one which would be expected to remain constant over time, for example as changes in crime rates affect both the need to contact the police and police activity. Is homogenisation of opinion associated with homogenisation of experience?

As Bradford, Stanko and Jackson (2009) point out, it is surprising, given the known association between personal contact with the police and lower levels of confidence, that over the period in which confidence has declined rates of contact did as well. Table 2 shows that the proportion of people who had initiated a contact with the police in the last year in 2005/06 was around half that in 1988. In part this mirrored a decline in victimisation (as recorded by the BCS) over the same period – however the decline in self-initiated contacts was essentially uni-directional, but victimisation rates rose from 1988 to 1994/96 before falling back. Rates of contact also fell over periods when victimisation remained constant. So although the overall decrease in self-initiated contacts from 1988 to 2005/06 can probably be explained in part by falling crime rates this is not the only factor involved.

Rates of police-initiated contact, and within this of police stops, were also lower in 2005/06 than in 1988, although the difference was much smaller. Police-initiated contacts also mirrored victimisation rates more closely, increasing to 1996 before falling from then on. The change in the rate of *stops* reported in the BCS therefore differs significantly from

change in the number of *searches* recorded by the police (Ayres and Murray 2005). For example, between 1994 and 1998 the percentage of BCS respondents stopped by the police in the previous 12 months fell slightly, from 16 to 14 per cent. Over the same period searches of persons or vehicles recorded under section 1 of PACE and other legislation almost doubled, from 0.58 million to 1.1 million. Reasons for these differences may include the difficulty of accessing in sample surveys those most likely to receive this sort of police attention or that stop and search activity repeatedly targets a relatively small number of individuals. Most importantly, these issues underline that BCS data apply to the general population, and that it is *general* experiences and views which are under examination here.

Table 2
Contact with the police: 1988 to 2005/06
England and Wales

Percentages

	1988	1994	2000	2003/2004	2005/2006
Any self-initiated	*53*	*42*	*35*	*30*	*28*
Any police-initiated	*26*	*28*	*24*	*20*	*20*
Stopped by police	*14*	*16*	*13*	*11*	*10*
Victimisation rate	*39*	*46*	*38*	*27*	*25*
Self-initiated contacts only					
By age					
16-24	*58*	*45*	*34*	*30*	*30*
25-34	*60*	*51*	*44*	*35*	*35*
35-44	*61*	*51*	*42*	*37*	*35*
45-54	*59*	*49*	*38*	*34*	*34*
55-64	*48*	*34*	*31*	*28*	*27*
65-74	*34*	*26*	*21*	*20*	*18*
75 and over	*25*	*15*	*16*	*13*	*12*
By broad ethnic category					
White	*54*	*43*	*36*	*31*	*28*
Black	*56*	*42*	*33*	*27*	*29*
Asian	*45*	*34*	*31*	*25*	*23*
Police stops only					
By age					
16-24	*31*	*33*	*29*	*26*	*27*
25-34	*18*	*25*	*18*	*15*	*15*
35-44	*14*	*18*	*14*	*12*	*11*
45-54	*11*	*14*	*12*	*9*	*8*
55-64	*6*	*7*	*9*	*7*	*7*
By broad ethnic category					
White	*13*	*15*	*13*	*10*	*9*
Black	*20*	*26*	*17*	*14*	*17*
Asian	*12*	*15*	*12*	*11*	*9*

Notes:

Data are from dataset combining all sweeps of the BCS from 1984 to 2005/06 and may differ slightly from those presented elsewhere.

Older age groups excluded when number of positive responses is low.

Source: British Crime Survey 1988; 1994; 2000; 2003/04; 2005/06

The overall decline in rates of self-initiated contact shown was repeated for all age groups, and in an echo of the patterns for trust and confidence already described, the biggest declines occurred among those most likely to initiate contact in 1988 and the smallest among those least likely. Although the pattern was not as strong here there is a definite sense in which the overall decline in use of the police occurred alongside a relative homogenisation across different age groups. Since the most common reason for contacting the police is to report a crime, either as witness or victim (Allen *et al.* 2006; Bradford, Jackson and Stanko 2009), and again noting the close correspondence of self-initiated contacts with the victimisation rate, at least part of the reason for this relative homogenisation must lie in changes in the level of crime. It may be that, since crime has a disproportionate impact on the young (Walker *et al.* 2006), falling crime rates will have a greater effect in the younger age groups (at least those represented here), and make the experience of the young more similar to that of older people. Turning to the relationship between broad ethnic category and self-initiated contact, contact rates fell among the White, Black and Asian groups such that those groups most likely need to contact the police in 1988 (White and Black) experienced the greatest reduction and variation by ethnic group in rate of self-initiated contact was lower in 2005/06 than it was in 1988.

Mirroring the increase in crime rates, the proportion experiencing a police stop rose between 1988 and the mid 1990s before falling back to slightly below 1988 levels by 2005/06. Table 3 shows that this pattern occurred almost uniformly among different age groups, with the biggest fluctuations occurring in the 16-34 age range. There was therefore more variation by age in stop-rates in the early 1990s, when crime-levels were highest, than there was in the relatively lower crime period a decade later. Again, something of a flattening out of experience is suggested. On the other hand there is a consistency over time such that stop rates and differences in experience between age groups are broadly similar across the period. Despite a 15 point reduction in the rate of victimisation, people of all ages were only slightly less likely to be stopped in 2005/06 than people of an equivalent age in 1988.

The disproportionality in police stop/search activity in terms of ethnicity race is well known, even if its extent and causes are sometimes disputed (Bowling and Philips 2007; Waddington *et al.* 2004).The BCS data again differ considerably from police stop/search data; for example, reported stop and search rates for the Black population were 83 per 1,000 in 2003/04, compared with 13 per 1,000 for the White population (Delsol and Shiner 2006: Table 1). Differences in stop rates by broad ethnic category were, overall, maintained across the period shown in Table 2. People from the Black ethnic groups were more likely

than those from White or Asian groups to be stopped in 1988, and this remained the case right through to 2005/06. But there as also interesting variation. As stop and search rates fell the gap between the White, Black and Asian groups narrowed, to reach a low point in 2001/02, after which stop rates began to rise in the Black and Asian groups, but not in the White. As such, effects from the Stephen Lawrence enquiry (published in 1999 and highly critical of the policing of ethnic minorities) and then the terrorist attacks of 9/11 are at least hinted. People's different, and changing, experiences of the police may be influenced not only by the crime rate, but political and social activity around crime and other matters. Of course, directly attributing effects to events such as the Stephen Lawrence enquiry is problematic. As Rowe (2004) points out the decline in stops started before the enquiry, and the disparity between ethnic groups remained, even if it was smaller.

To summarise, it appears that with regard to variations in public contact with the police by age and ethnicity the story over the period 1988 to 2005/06 was one of a gradual homogenisation of experience within an overall framework of declining proportions of people experiencing contact with the police. This was of course an incomplete and sometimes contradictory process. Any homogenisation of experience which did occur appeared to be of a lesser magnitude than that found in opinions of the police reported above. However the strong suggestion remains that change over the period, from fluctuations in the crime rate through to terrorism, combined to produce patterns of personal experience which were more similar across different population groups in 2005/06 than they had been in 1988.

Confidence 1992 to 2003/04 – the impacts of age, ethnic category and contact with the police

Across the time scale and categories in question here, then, rates of contact with, and confidence in, the police appear to have converged, or at least remained constant. But the bivariate analyses presented above cannot take into account the many other factors might be at work. The remaining task is therefore to investigate in more depth the associations of age, ethnicity and personal contact with trust and confidence in the police, and how these have changed over time. To this end Table 3 displays results from four ordinal logistic regression models predicting ratings of the local police. All contain data from 7 sweeps of the BCS over the period 1992 to 2003/04. Model 1 contains main effects only, while Models 2 to 4 add, respectively, interactions between age and year, ethnic group and year, and satisfaction with contact and year. This format was chosen in order to identify any change in the associations of interesting while holding many other potentially relevant

factors and retaining a manageable, easily interpretable, design. As shown in Table 3 a range of potential control variables were available in the BCS, and partialling these out of the equation allows firmer links to be drawn between the key variables of interest.

Looking first at Model 1 in Table 3, over the period as a whole increasing age was (controlling for the other variables in the model) associated with a more favourable view of the local police, as was membership of a non-White ethnic group. Opinions worsened over time (although the squared effect of survey year, significant at the 10 per cent level, hints at a non-linear relationship which amounted to a flattening out of the decline). Satisfactory contacts were associated with slightly more favourable views, while unsatisfactory ones were associated with considerably less favourable opinions. Turning to the control variables, being female, having children, a university education and being in the very lowest or very highest income categories were all characteristics independently associated with more favourable views; having access to a car, being a council tenant, being unemployed or retired, and having been a recent victim of crime were all associated with less favourable views. Finally, ratings of the police worsened as worry about crime increased. It should be noted that although they are strongly statistically significant the magnitude of these effects is often relatively small (a result of the extremely large sample size).

Table 3

Ordinal logistic regression models predicting ratings of the local police

(Higher values = lower rating)

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	Odds Ratio	95% Confidence Interval		**Odds Ratio**	95% Confidence Interval		**Odds Ratio**	95% Confidence Interval		**Odds Ratio**	95% Confidence Interval	
Age	**0.991 *****	0.990	0.993	**0.968 *****	0.964	0.972	**0.991 *****	0.990	0.993	**0.991 *****	0.990	0.993
Sex (ref: male)												
Female	**0.828 *****	0.796	0.861	**0.828 *****	0.796	0.861	**0.828 *****	0.796	0.860	**0.829 *****	0.797	0.861
Broad ethnic category (ref: White)												
Black	**0.747 *****	0.695	0.803	**0.747 *****	0.695	0.803	**1.859 *****	1.365	2.532	**0.747 *****	0.695	0.803
Asian	**0.779 *****	0.732	0.830	**0.786 *****	0.738	0.837	**1.647 *****	1.249	2.171	**0.780 *****	0.732	0.830
Other	**0.697 *****	0.624	0.778	**0.709 *****	0.635	0.791	**1.197**	0.655	2.186	**0.697 *****	0.624	0.778
Car access (ref: no)												
Yes	**1.071 *****	1.019	1.125	**1.063 ****	1.011	1.117	**1.072 *****	1.020	1.126	**1.070 *****	1.018	1.124
Place of residence (ref: not inner city)												
Inner city	**1.228 *****	1.163	1.296	**1.222 *****	1.158	1.289	**1.210 *****	1.146	1.277	**1.227 *****	1.163	1.295
Household size	**1.045 *****	1.020	1.070	**1.042 *****	1.017	1.067	**1.042 *****	1.018	1.068	**1.045 *****	1.020	1.070
Number of children in household	**0.940 *****	0.899	0.983	**0.939 *****	0.898	0.982	**0.937 *****	0.896	0.980	**0.941 *****	0.900	0.984
Education (ref: below university degree)												
Bachelors degree and above	**0.861 *****	0.815	0.909	**0.869 *****	0.822	0.917	**0.864 *****	0.818	0.912	**0.862 *****	0.816	0.911
Tenancy (ref: all others)												
Council renter	**1.158 *****	1.100	1.219	**1.167 *****	1.109	1.229	**1.162 *****	1.104	1.223	**1.160 *****	1.102	1.221
Household income (ref: middle bands)												
Lowest	**0.894 ****	0.800	0.998	**0.900 ***	0.807	1.005	**0.906 ***	0.812	1.012	**0.892 ****	0.799	0.995
Highest	**0.845 *****	0.789	0.906	**0.844 *****	0.788	0.905	**0.848 *****	0.791	0.908	**0.841 *****	0.785	0.902
Employment status (ref:employed/other econ. inactive)												
Part-time	**0.999**	0.943	1.059	**0.995**	0.939	1.055	**0.998**	0.942	1.058	**0.998**	0.941	1.058
Unemployed	**1.152 *****	1.065	1.246	**1.131 *****	1.046	1.224	**1.142 *****	1.056	1.235	**1.150 *****	1.063	1.243
Retired	**1.076 ****	1.013	1.143	**1.045**	0.984	1.110	**1.071 ****	1.008	1.137	**1.072 ****	1.009	1.138
Student	**0.938**	0.834	1.055	**0.925**	0.823	1.041	**0.934**	0.830	1.051	**0.935**	0.831	1.052
Victim of crime in previous 12 months (ref: no)												
Yes	**1.444 *****	1.384	1.507	**1.432 *****	1.372	1.495	**1.441 *****	1.381	1.504	**1.442 *****	1.382	1.505
Worry about crime (factor score)	**1.108 *****	1.096	1.122	**1.108 *****	1.095	1.121	**1.109 *****	1.096	1.122	**1.109 *****	1.096	1.122
Contact with the police (ref: none)												
Satisfactory self-initiated	**0.682 *****	0.650	0.716	**0.678 *****	0.646	0.712	**0.683 *****	0.651	0.718	**0.870**	0.726	1.043
Unsatisfactory self-initiated	**3.011 *****	2.812	3.224	**3.008 *****	2.809	3.221	**3.010 *****	2.811	3.223	**3.167 *****	2.354	4.261
Satisfactory police-initiated	**0.719 *****	0.684	0.755	**0.714 *****	0.680	0.750	**0.719 *****	0.684	0.755	**0.967**	0.801	1.167
Unsatisfactory police-initiated	**2.839 *****	2.577	3.128	**2.806 *****	2.547	3.092	**2.809 *****	2.549	3.095	**3.644 *****	2.525	5.260
Survey year	**1.087 *****	1.045	1.130	**1.029**	0.989	1.071	**1.074 *****	1.033	1.116	**1.101 *****	1.059	1.145
Square of survey year	**0.999 ***	0.997	1.000	**0.998 ****	0.997	1.000	**1.000**	0.998	1.001	**0.999 ***	0.997	1.000
Interaction effects												
Age*survey year				**1.001 *****	1.001	1.002						
Black*survey year							**0.946 *****	0.929	0.963			
Asian*survey year							**0.956 *****	0.940	0.971			
Other*survey year							**0.969 ***	0.937	1.002			
Satisfactory self-initiated*survey year										**0.984 *****	0.973	0.996
Unsatisfactory self-initiated*survey year										**0.997**	0.980	1.015
Satisfactory police-initiated*survey year										**0.981 *****	0.970	0.993
Unsatisfactory police-initiated*survey year										**0.984**	0.962	1.007

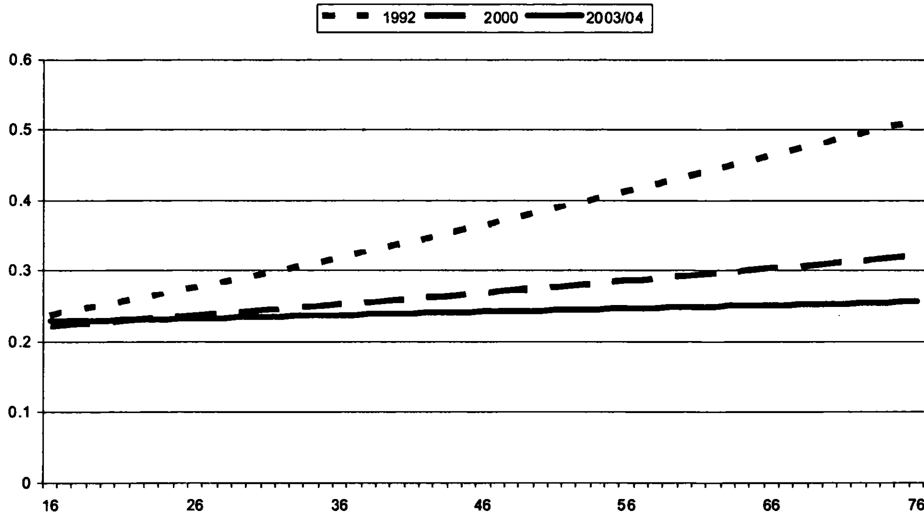
Unweighted base 45,483

*** $p<0.01$; ** $p<0.05$; * $p<0.1$.

Source: British Crime Survey 1992 to 2003/04

Model 2 shows the interaction between survey year and age. That the coefficient for the interaction term is greater than one suggests that as time went by opinions of the local police declined to a greater extent in the older age groups than the younger – in other words, the bivariate picture shown in Tables 1 and 2 above is repeated. Furthermore the coefficient for survey year is no longer significant in the model, suggesting that the overall decline in ratings of the local police from 1992 to 2003/04 was almost entirely due to changes in variation by age across the period. To reinforce the overall message, Figure 1 shows estimated probabilities of rating the local police as 'very good' in 1992, 2000 and 2003/04, by age, as generated from Model 2. It underlines that while net of other factors opinions in the youngest age groups changed relatively little over those 12 years, opinions in the older age groups changed considerably. Although there was a decline across all ages between 1992 and 2000, this continued in the older groups to 2003/04 while it had all but ceased in the younger. This evidence strongly supports the idea that the period from the early 1990s into the new century witnessed a major change in opinions of the police such that residues of (strong) support for the police among older people declined significantly. This effect was so strong that by 2003/04 there was almost no independent association between age and rating of the local police – there was, indeed, a convergence of views.

Figure 1
Predicted probability of thinking police do a 'very good' job: by age, 1992, 2000 and 2003/04
Fitted values generated from ordinal logistic regresssion model



Source: British Crime Survey 1992 to 2003/04

Model 3 in Table 3 contains the interaction between survey year and ethnic group. Recall that the bivariate data presented in Table 1 suggested a decline in opinions of the police among those from all ethnic categories, but that opinion worsened the most in the

White groups. The multivariate analysis supports this picture; controlling for other factors opinions of the police were initially very similar across all three categories. However over time opinions in the Black and Asian groups *improved* relative to those in the White group, such that by the end of the period covered people from the Black and Asian groups were predicted to have significantly more favourable opinions of the police. It is hard not to read this data in the light of police attempts to improve relations with ethnic minority communities and through this improve relations with the public as a whole. Such attempts may have had some success, but in many respects they have failed to stem the overall tide as opinions in the White groups, which dominate nationally and in most local situations, have deteriorated faster. These results are strongly suggestive of the processes of disenchantment suggested by Reiner and others, as those groups who previously had the most favourable views had the greatest declines in trust and confidence.[3]

Finally Model 4 in Table 3 demonstrates that the effects of contact on confidence changed over time, but only in relation to satisfactory contacts and in what for the police is a positive direction: net of other factors the effect of satisfactory contact on confidence increased over time. The data shown in Model 4 suggest that, as found by Skogan (2006), there was almost complete asymmetry in the impact of contact on confidence in the 1992 BCS. However as time progressed the positive effect of satisfactory contact grew. It seems that if there has been a increasingly consumer-oriented approach to police and policing among the public this may not have had entirely negative effects in terms of trust and confidence, since people seem somewhat more willing now than in the past to give the police credit for well handled contacts. The extent of this credit should not be exaggerated, of course, and throughout the period in question the impact of unsatisfactory contacts remained substantially greater.

Discussion

Recent theoretical and empirical research on policing has emphasised an ever-growing variety in policing policies and practises, and discussed the implications for policing of increasing population diversity. In a similar fashion opinions of the police, perhaps within an overall setting of a long-term decline, are in essence held to be fragmented, as residues of support are maintained in some groups just as strong or consistent support appears to have disappeared forever among others. The evidence presented here does not directly contradict these positions. Macro-level survey data are a poor tool for accessing the

[3] Analysis of the full dataset, including earlier years which did not include questions on satisfaction with contacts, suggested that over the whole period 1984 to 2003/04 this process was even more pronounced.

multiplicity of situations, circumstances and environments in which people encounter, and form judgements about, the police. However the BCS data offer a cautionary note to any assumptions that experiences of the police have inevitably become more diverse. As much as the post- or late-modern condition creates diversity and divergence, accompanying social and economic changes can also flatten out and homogenise experience and even opinion. This appears to have had important implications for the distribution, experience and assessments of public contacts with the police, and trust and confidence generally. In a continuation of a longer term trends, from the early 1990s through to the middle of the first decade of the new century variation between people of different ages and different ethnic groups in rates of contact with the police declined, or at the very least remained constant. Rather than an increase in diversity there has according to the measures used here been something of an homogenisation. Overall rates of contact declined and variation by age shrunk. Similarly, although those from Black ethnic groups were more likely to experience a police stop over the whole period, there was less variation by ethnic group at the end of it than there was at the beginning.

There was also evidence of a growing similarity in views around confidence in the local police. This was particularly evident across different age groups, where declines in confidence were much greater among older people. Because confidence was higher initially in the former, the result at the aggregate level was a greater similarity in views by 2003/4. Trust and confidence also fell by considerably more among Whites than it did in the Black and Asian groups. By the measure used, then, confidence declined most rapidly in those groups – the elderly, Whites – who started with the highest levels of confidence. While it may be true that there remain pockets of strong support for the police, as well as a certain legitimacy which may be almost pre-conscious (Loader and Mulcahy 2003, Smith 2007b) it appears that has been a distinct disenchantment with the police among those who previously held it in highest regard.

Turning to the impact of personal experience on trust and confidence, the unique effect of contact *increased* over time, such that variations in ratings of the local police by contact experience was greater in 2003/04 that it had been in the past. This occurred seemingly because of change in the effect of satisfactory contact. On one level this appears to go against the general picture of homogenisation. However recall that these effects were present when controlling for other characteristics such as age and ethnicity. In other words it is net of 'group-level' orientations and therefore more aligned with 'individual' responses. As would be suggested by the individualization paradigm, there was over time

an increasing impact of *personal* experience over and above opinions or experiences inculcated and effective at the group level.

Conclusions

It is not surprising that experiences of and opinions about the police change over time. With regard to contact between police and public, there are many economic, social and cultural forces that intersect to create changes in patterns of crime and rates of victimisation, in propensities to contact the police, and in the use of public spaces and attendance at events subject to police supervision. But equally, police activities are also influenced by political imperatives to concentrate on particular crimes or groups of people as well as changes in resource allocations and developments in ideas about 'what works' (or doesn't). Encounters between police and public occur in a wider social climate in which opinions of the police may be affected by external pressures, such as a perceived failures to deal with crime and disorder, as well as potentially buttressing structures of feeling as the police continue to represent, to some, community, nation and cohesion.

Such developments, increasing in number and magnitude as the juggernaut of modernity (Giddens 1991) rolls on, might be expected to produce a picture of contact with and confidence in the police which grows ever more diverse and fragmented. This may well be the case at the micro-level, perhaps exacerbated by a late- or post-modern condition that promotes a multiplication of identities, and thus of orientations toward the police. However the evidence presented here suggests that at the macro-level, along two axes particularly relevant to British policing, age and ethnicity, such divergence has not occurred over the time scale available. Rather, a convergence of experience and views has taken place. The picture developed here fits well with theories of individualization and homogenization which suggest that for many the life-world has been flattened out, old social structures have broken down, and that people are experiencing an increasing standardisation of their lives (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). Such standardisation appears to have resulted in more similar experiences of the police. This appears to have been associated with a complementary process wherein those groups which previously retained strong levels of support for the police – older people and to a lesser extent those from the White group – lost much more of this support relative to others. The result has been not only been homogenisation of opinion, but a levelling down.

This process, which runs against much current theorizing around the police that emphasises difference and fragmentation in social identity and variability in the type of policing desired by different groups, has some important implications. Just as Jones and

Newburn (2002) offer a riposte to the idea that policing provision is becoming more fragmented, suggesting that in many ways it has become less so, the evidence presented here cautions against too strong an emphasis on the idea that experiences of the police have also become more diverse; on the contrary, it appears that the influence of age and ethnicity has declined while at the same time the effect of personal experience on opinions has increased. Further, as trust and confidence in the police has levelled down, Reiner's (2000) idea of post-legitimacy seems more and more pertinent. For many people the old legitimations of the police, representatives of law and order, community, nation – perhaps "Leviathan enacted" (Manning 1997: 20) – hold less and less sway. Other, more prosaic and less deeply felt feelings may have become important: quality of service and other consumer-oriented concerns, perhaps.

Other work cautions against venturing too far down this path. The strong feelings of affect toward and ownership of the police felt by Girling *et al's* (2000) interviewees should not be discounted. Despite the decline in trust and confidence there remains a strong residue of support for the police among many people and, furthermore, the police may retain a largely unchallenged legitimacy as an institution which exists prior to any considerations about its performance as an organisation (Mawby 2002; Smith 2007b; cf. Easton 1975). The analysis presented here can have little to say about such deeply held opinions. Equally, further work is needed to more accurately define the social groups of interest as well as explore others. This is particularly important given critiques of individualization theories which point, for example, to continued salience of class in people's everyday experiences and structuring circumstances (Atkinson 2007).

What then are the implications for the actual activity of policing? It is a key theme in both Bauman's and Beck's work, albeit one which is perhaps overstated, that individualization takes place as other layers or aspects of life are stripped away, leaving people 'naked' to face the world alone. So, instead of liquid or post-modernity leaving in its wake fractured, smaller, more diverse *groups*, it leaves *individuals* (or consumers) interacting with the police without intervening sensibilities (perhaps those once inculcated by generational factors or ethnicity). Or facing, alone, a representation of the nation/state, to which they still feel affiliation (or antagonism). Of course, it would stretch credulity to suggest that age and particularly ethnicity now have little or no impact on experiences of and opinions about the police. But the evidence presented here suggests that they may not have the influence that is sometimes assumed. On this basis calls for diversification in policing methods and practices may be exaggerated. Perhaps people do not require or even want police services tailored to their personal circumstances, not least because such

circumstances may change extremely rapidly. Such an idea finds resonance not only with traditional ideas about equality of treatment under (and by) the law – which, as Reiner (2000) reminds us, where key in the original legitimation myth of the British police – but also with psychologically based models of police-public relationships which stress the importance of fair procedure and just treatment (Tyler 1990; Tyler and Huo 2002). It may be that improvements in trust and confidence will be found not in a tailoring of services to specific groups, which may be transitory and which in any case represent only one aspect of their members lives, but in the provision of a more uniform service which treats all as citizens as having an equal claim to membership of and services from the state.

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INTERLUDE I

The first paper above sketched out the broad contours of contact with and confidence in the police since 1984. The key finding was the apparently decreasing salience of socio-cultural position – as represented by the key variables of age and ethnicity – in individual's experiences and assessments. In contrast, the impact of contact on confidence seemed to *grow* over time.

The discussion above interpreted these changes as consistent with the work of Ulrich Beck and Zygmunt Bauman who, along with other theorists, suggest that the late modern condition is not necessarily or only associated with diversification and fragmentation, as post-modernists would have it, but also with a homogenization of experience and practise as trends of marketization, globalization and individualization converge to produce an ever-more similar life world for hitherto diverse groups of people. But perhaps we should be more concerned here with a more practical implication, in that it appears how people experience contact with the police *as individuals* is of increasing importance in the formation of opinions.

It is in this light that the next paper undertakes a more detailed examination of association between contact and confidence. Using data from a survey representative this time of Londoners only, it introduces two of the key themes of this thesis – procedural justice and the multi-faceted nature of trust in the police. It also assesses the socio-economic and cultural correlates of confidence in some depth.

As already noted this paper has already been published in *Policing and Society*. A slightly edited version is reproduced here. This is because the version initially published contained many printer's errors in the tables, which were corrected in an erratum in a later edition (see *Policing and Society* 19(1) and 19(2)). The version included here combines the original text with corrected versions of the tables.

PAPER TWO

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Contact and confidence: revisiting the impact of public encounters with the police

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Public confidence in policing has become an important issue in the UK. The police rely on legitimacy and public support, and initiatives to improve levels of confidence are currently underway. The point of contact between citizens and officers is vital in any such endeavour. But how are encounters judged and how important for public confidence are assessments of the quality of contacts? We draw upon data from the 2005/2006 Metropolitan Police Public Attitudes Survey to answer these questions. We test Skogan's (2006) finding that personal contact has a largely negative impact on confidence; we demonstrate that unsatisfactory contacts are indeed associated with less favourable opinions about police effectiveness, fairness and engagement with the community. Yet consistent with the procedural justice model we also show that positively received contacts can improve perceptions of fairness and community engagement. Moreover, seeing regular police patrols and feeling informed about police activities are associated with higher opinions of effectiveness and community engagement. We conclude with some more positive thoughts on the ability of the police to improve the quality of contacts and, perhaps, public confidence.

Keywords: public confidence in policing; police contact; legitimacy; trust and confidence

Introduction

The key indicator of public confidence in policing in England and Wales has for many years been a question in the British Crime Survey which asks respondents 'how good' a job they feel the police are doing (Roberts and Hough 2005). This cornerstone measure has demonstrated a decline in confidence in England and Wales since the 1950s and 1960s (Reiner 2000, Loader and Mulcahy 2003, Roberts and Hough 2005). Moreover, numerous studies have shown that the police are on average rated more highly by individuals who had no contact with them in the previous year than by those who did have such contact (see for example, Fitzgerald *et al.* 2002, Allen *et al.* 2006, Skogan 2006). That personal experience seems to reduce citizen confidence in the police is an outcome unlike that found in other public services in the UK, and is contrary to the public sector service ethos – to which the police are expected to conform – that has been building in the UK Treasury for nearly a decade.

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Concern over how people feel about public services such as the police has sparked several initiatives from the current government. In 2001 the Public Sector Productivity Panel policy treatise *Customer Focused Government – From Policy to Delivery* (Barker 2001) advocated that treating the public as customers would help transform public services. In 2003 the joint Cabinet Office and Home Office report on citizen focused policing underscored the importance of public satisfaction as directly linked to confidence (Office of Public Service Reform 2003). Building on such foundations, police services across England and Wales are currently putting in place programmes to improve citizen experience of contact, adopting the ACPO Quality of Service Commitment in November 2006. By addressing the quality of encounters between the public and police, the objective is to foster public endorsement of the delivery of a public good – a police service that 'serves'.

Public satisfaction with the police is at the heart of the British political agenda for policing, regardless of which party is speaking.[1] Yet policies to improve public satisfaction are founded on the assumption of a symmetrical relationship between contact with the police and public confidence in policing. Just as poorly handled encounters can damage confidence, it is expected that well-handled encounters can improve it. However, efforts to enhance the quality of contacts between police and public are confronted by a central conundrum, recently underlined by Skogan (2006): positive personal experience may not actually improve the way people feel about policing. Any attempt to improve the quality of public encounters with the police may therefore fail to have any knock-on positive effects on confidence.

Drawing on data from the 2005/2006 London Metropolitan Police Public Attitude Survey (METPAS), we both test and extend Skogan's (2006) work, contributing to an emerging body of research in the UK on public encounters with the police (Cooke 2005, McAra and McVie 2005, Delsol and Shiner 2006, Skogan 2006, Viki *et al.* 2006, Crawford 2007, Sharp and Atherton 2007). Following past research which shows that public confidence in policing is a multi-dimensional concept (Fitzgerald *et al.* 2002, Jackson and Sunshine 2007; see also US work on legitimacy and 'process-based policing': Sunshine and Tyler 2003a,b, Tyler and Fagan 2006, Reisig *et al.* 2007), we address three inter-related but empirically distinct components of public confidence: public attitudes towards police effectiveness; public attitudes towards police fairness; and public attitudes towards police community engagement. Measuring confidence in this way, we replicate Skogan's key finding that any type of contact (including well-handled encounters) has a negative impact on public attitudes towards police *effectiveness*.

But we also find that positively received encounters *can* improve public confidence in police *fairness* and *community engagement*. And we show for the first time that perceptions of increased visibility and receipt of information can improve all three components of confidence (effectiveness, fairness and community engagement), net of contact and other factors. By contradicting the commonly held assumption amongst British based criminologists that police can do little to improve lay opinion in the course of their encounters with the public, our findings open up a more optimistic view: treating individuals with fairness and respect – and providing a more visible and accessible police force – may well help improve public confidence in policing.

Public encounters with the police

As one of a number of police initiatives to counter the decline in public trust and confidence, 'reassurance' policing draws on the promise of greater public trust, legitimacy and consent through better quality contacts. Improvements in police visibility, communication with the public and the number and quality of personal contacts are here linked to (a) increases in trust and confidence; (b) decreases in the fear of crime; and (c) improvements in the quality of people's lives (Fielding 2005, Crawford 2007, Innes 2007). How, then, might the police improve the quality of their encounters with the public?

A significant body of research highlights the importance of improving the fairness and transparency of the procedures used by officers. For example, a recent study of Londoners found that the main cause of dissatisfaction with police contacts among crime victims was a perceived lack of fairness, interest and effort on the part of officers, rather than lack of a 'result' (Fitzgerald *et al.* 2002). This is consistent with the findings of a number of US studies (e.g. Tyler 2001, Tyler and Fagan 2006; see also Mastrofski *et al.* 1996, 2002, McCluskey *et al.* 1999, McCluskey 2003, Engel 2005). According to Skogan (2006, p. 104):

> One consistent finding is that victims are less 'outcome'-oriented than they are 'process'-oriented – that is, they are less concerned about someone being caught or (in many instances) getting stolen property back, than they are in how promptly and responsibly they are treated by the authorities. Police are judged by what physicians might call their 'bedside manner'. Factors like how willing they are to listen to people's stories and show concern for their plight are very important, as are their politeness, helpfulness and fairness. Rapid response has positive effects as well.

The importance of procedural fairness also generalises to contexts other than public encounters with the police. A substantial body of social psychological research – applied to a variety of settings – shows that fair and transparent procedures influence satisfaction amongst decision recipients, regardless of whether the outcomes received were personally beneficial (Thibaut and Walker 1975, Leventhal *et al.* 1980, Lind and Tyler 1988, Folger and Cropanzano 1998, van den Bos and Lind 2002). Lind and Tyler (1988) identify three criteria that individuals use to judge whether they have been treated fairly: trustworthiness, neutrality and standing. Trustworthiness refers to the belief that authorities care about individuals and have their best interests in mind; neutrality refers to unbiased decision making; and standing refers to being treated politely, with dignity, and with respect for the one's rights. Lind and Tyler's theory asserts that the presence these three elements signifies to individuals that they are valued members of their social groups, which in turn enhances their sense of procedural fairness.

Skogan's remarks quoted above and the substance of the procedural justice model intersect in further ways. In particular, both would stress the importance of visible performances of competency and proper decision making. The public appear to prioritise behaviours such as dealing with matters promptly, listening to those involved, following correct procedure and, in some sense, offering concrete help (even if this does not end in a 'result'). These behaviours communicate both the seriousness with which the situation is taken, and therefore of the status of those involved, *and* the competence of the police – its ability to do the job with which it is tasked. As Reiner (2000) discusses, the long process of legitimating the police in

England and Wales rested in part on the successful communication of police competence, and this process appears to be ongoing. While the provision of a more visible police force – through more bobbies on the beat – may not on its own be enough to increase public confidence (Quinton and Morris 2008), it is important that the police not only do things properly but are seen to do them properly as well.

There is thus empirical evidence for the idea that people are sensitive to how they treated by authorities; individuals are satisfied with encounters when the police are seen to make objective decisions and treat people with dignity and respect (Tyler 2003). However, the question motivating this paper is a connected but separate one: can well-handled encounters have a positive effect on public confidence in policing?

Unhappily for police initiatives that seek to improve confidence by improving contact, the available UK research suggests they will fail. Fitzgerald *et al.* (2002) found that having been stopped on foot or having sought police help in the last year was predictive of a lower level of confidence in the police. Drawing on data from the 1992 British Crime Survey (and from studies conducted in a range of US cities), Skogan (2006) showed a marked asymmetry in the impact of contact on public confidence in the effectiveness and level of community engagement of the police: positively assessed encounters (on whatever basis the assessment is made) failed to result in improvements in confidence; while negatively assessed encounters continued to have the predicted effect. Thus far, it seems, the impact of contact is damaging at worst, negligible at best.

The peculiar nature of public encounters with the police

So why would positively received encounters with the police fail to have a knock-on positive effect on public attitudes towards the effectiveness of the police? Skogan (2006) points to Weitzer and Tuch's (2004) twin suggestions that, in their dealings with the police, people may either dismiss good experiences as exceptions to the norm, or treat good service as a given and react only to bad. Skogan also emphasises that pre-existing ideas shape how experiences are interpreted; the social, cultural and emotional 'baggage' brought to an encounter with the police may have a determining role in how both process *and* outcome are interpreted. So, for example, positive encounters may not lead to improved overall assessments because they are either expected (by those with previously positive views about the police) or viewed as one-off freak occurrences (among those with previously negative views). In contrast, unsatisfactory contacts could challenge previously positive views and reinforce previously negative ones.

Waddington (1999) provides further insights. Because the police patrol the boundaries of inclusion/exclusion, contact with them is inherently status challenging. The best that can be expected of any encounter is confirmation of individual's social standing, but there are many possibilities for police behaviour to undermine this status, resulting in resentment and consequently damaging opinions of the police. Waddington also notes Bittner's (1970) conceptualisation of policing as a tainted occupation, associated with crime, disorder and unpleasantness, and that the police monopoly on legitimate violence is a threat to all those who come into contact with it. Smith (2007) suggests that the police are taboo objects, sacred and set apart. Part of the population has very little contact with the police and regards them as 'perfect'. For this group, personal contact will inevitably be unsettling, involving a potential

breach of the taboo and consequent undermining of the sacred image of the police. Other groups have relatively frequent contact with the police, and the results of such contacts are likely be mixed at best. After all, those who need the help of the police may also be those targeted for surveillance or intervention.

In short, there are many suggestions in the policing literature that *any* contact with the police might be unsettling, disturbing and potentially endangering to trust and confidence. Of course even if there is asymmetry, the behaviour of officers when dealing with the public is still important. Poor handling of contacts still leads to a decline in trust and confidence. The problem for the police is that there may be little hope of enhancing confidence even if they improve the way they treat people, since asymmetry suggests contact that is handled well does not have a commensurate positive impact – and confidence is a key indicator of how well police are providing a public good paid for by the public purse. 'The empirical message is, unfortunately: "You can't win, you can just cut your losses". No matter what you do, it only counts when it goes against you' (Skogan 2006, p. 119).

Unpacking the concept of public confidence in policing

Thus far however, existing research into the impact of public encounters with the police has defined 'public confidence' in a rather simplistic manner (Turner *et al.* 2007). Just as the point of contact between the police and the public is varied and fraught with meaning, so public confidence is complex in its scope and significance. Skogan (2006) measured public confidence using one summary index of public satisfaction with police effectiveness and community engagement. Other work has differentiated between three components of confidence: effectiveness; community engagement; *and* procedural fairness (Sunshine and Tyler 2003a,b, Jackson and Sunshine 2007; see also Reisig *et al.* 2007). As Fitzgerald *et al.* (2002, p. xvii) argue:

> In assessing confidence in the police it is important to distinguish between views about effectiveness and those about integrity and impartiality. People may trust the police to be fair without believing them to be effective, and vice versa.[2]

Not only might such components be empirically distinct; they might also work within a dynamic model of overall confidence. Jackson and Sunshine (2007) showed that to garner public confidence in effectiveness, the police must be seen first to typify group morals and values, and second to treat people with dignity and fairness (see also Sunshine and Tyler 2003b). Moreover, feeling that one's community lacks cohesion, social trust and informal social control was much more important in deciding public confidence in policing than more instrumental concerns about personal safety. This work suggests that the public look to the police to defend community values and moral structures, especially when they believe these values and moral structures are under threat.

Indeed, it might be particularly important to identify specific judgements about police fairness when focusing on public encounters with the police. According to the procedural justice model developed by Tyler and colleagues, fair treatment (net of the actual outcomes of the treatment) will enhance satisfaction with the criminal justice system and improve perceptions of the legitimacy of the law and of the authorities who enforce it (Lind and Tyler 1988, Tyler and Fagan 2006). Unfair treatment will have the opposite effect. Sunshine and Tyler (2003a,b) found that

perceptions of procedural issues – whether the police treat citizens *in general* with dignity and respect – communicated both whether one was a valued member of the community and whether one's group was valued in the broader society. The perception of police fairness was a powerful determinant of moral and social identification with the police (and feeling that the police are prototypical representatives of the group) and of public support (for a UK perspective see Jackson and Sunshine 2007). This then manifested in cooperation with the police and compliance with the law (Tyler and Huo 2002). So when the public perceived that the police behave in a procedurally fair fashion, they were more likely to respond in a socially productive manner. Sunshine and Tyler (2003a,b) further showed that the legitimacy of the New York Police Department was strongly related to public perceptions of the fairness with which the police wielded their authority. But they did not address the impact of specific encounters with the police on public confidence.[3] Such an investigation is the principal contribution of the current paper.

The study

Research questions

Four questions motivated our analysis of the 2005/2006 London METPAS.

1. Are public attitudes towards police effectiveness, police fairness and police community engagement empirically distinct? How good are the measures of each?
2. Who experiences what sort of contact with the police?
3. Are individuals satisfied with their contact with the police, and which factors drive satisfaction?
4. What are the impacts of public encounters with the police, judgements about police visibility and feeling informed about police activity on public confidence?

The chief objective is to assess whether positively received public encounters with the police in London can have a positive effect on public confidence in policing (and therefore, perhaps, on public support and perceived legitimacy). Recall that Skogan (2006) found asymmetry in the impact of contact on public confidence. In his analysis he measured confidence using items reflecting lay attitudes towards police effectiveness and engagement. In this paper we draw on more recent data to examine whether the situation has changed in the last fifteen years. Crucially, we also define public confidence in a more multi-dimensional manner: we treat effectiveness, community engagement and fairness as empirically distinct dimensions of confidence that together underpin overall satisfaction with the police. By drawing upon the procedural justice model developed by Tyler and colleagues, we examine for the first time in UK research whether positively received contact can improve public attitudes towards the fairness of the police.

Moreover, as well as seeking to improve the quality of personal contacts *per se*, community or reassurance policing initiatives emphasise improving the visibility and accessibility of the police force (Fielding 2005, Hughes and Rowe 2007). Fitzgerald *et al.* (2002) found that both increasing the number of officers on foot patrol and improving engagement with the community and the flow of information were

important to PfL respondents. To capture factors which might influence confidence beyond face to face encounters, we therefore also address: (a) public perceptions of police visibility; and (b) whether individuals feel informed about what the police are doing. We ask whether perceptions of visibility, the frequency with which officers are observed 'on the streets', and the receipt of information about the police influence views about effectiveness, fairness and community engagement, net of public encounters, fear of crime, crime levels and other competing explanations.

Method

The survey

The METPAS is a large-scale, face-to-face, representative-sample survey of Londoners that is conducted on a rolling annual basis. The data presented here are from April 2005 to September 2006 (i.e. six quarters of the survey). The survey contains a range of questions on experience of and feelings about the police, as well as questions about crime victimisation, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime.[4] For full details, please see the technical report that accompanies this paper (Bradford and Jackson 2008).

Measuring public encounters with the police

UK research on public contact with the police has primarily concentrated on police-initiated encounters, where citizens are seen as suspects (at least potentially), most notably in examination of the disproportionate impact of stop and search activities on people from ethnic minority groups (for example, Miller *et al.* 2001, Bowling and Philips 2002, Fitzgerald *et al.* 2002). Analysis of public-initiated contacts has largely focused on the experiences and attitudes of victims of crime (Allen *et al.* 2006; but see Fitzgerald *et al.* 2002, pp. 50–54, for a discussion of 'users' of the police). However, encounters with the police may occur for a wide variety of reasons beyond a simple suspect/victim dichotomy: reporting or being involved in an accident, reporting suspicious or anti-social behaviour, being asked for information, or attendance at events subject to police supervision. In common with other writers (e.g. Clancy *et al.* 2001, Skogan 2006) the numerous possible types of contact between police and public are here divided into two broad categories, self-initiated (that is, instigated by a member of the public), and police-initiated.

METPAS respondents were asked about the quality of their most recent contacts with the police – for example, speed of response, whether the police took the matter seriously, and what follow up action they took. They were then asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the contact on a seven point scale, from completely satisfied to completely dissatisfied. This latter is the key measure used here, although the more detailed questions are also utilised in some analyses.

Measuring public confidence in policing

Much of the extant literature on public confidence has measured confidence using general ratings of the local and London-wide police. While clearly overlapping, there is evidence to suggest that people rate local police and the police more generally at

different levels (Schuck and Rosenbaum 2005). Broadly, the local police may be seen as a directly experienced body or group who deliver a service (or who fail to do so), while police 'in London' may be treated as an institution in the sociological sense. The strength of the institution is of particular significance, since the London-wide police are not just any institution, but 'Scotland Yard', one with a considerable history and globally branded reputation. Respondents were asked to give general ratings to their local police and the police 'in London as a whole' on five point scales, ranging from excellent to very poor in each case, before being asked to consider specific statements about the police 'in this area'. The questions were specifically designed to be compatible with those asked by the British Crime Survey.[5]

Yet treating trust and confidence as a unitary concept, measurable by a single indicator, risks over-simplifying a complex social phenomenon. Ideas about police effectiveness and the ability to do 'the job' of dealing with crime and catching criminals; fairness when dealing with people; and responsiveness to the wants and needs of the community – all may constitute separate components of overall trust and confidence (Jackson and Sunshine 2007, cf. Reisig *et al.* 2007). Crucially, what happens during personal contacts may impact on these separate 'components' of trust and confidence in quite different ways. An unsatisfactory police-initiated contact may challenge views about police fairness, for example, while a victim of crime who feels they are dealt with poorly may come away with a lower opinion of police effectiveness.

To address these issues we developed three indices to cover the separate components of trust and confidence: (a) effectiveness of the policing in dealing with crime; (b) fairness or integrity of the police; and (c) the extent to which the police engage with the local community.[6] We carried out ordinal latent trait models using full information maximum likelihood estimation (using Latent Gold 4.0), fitting a one-factor model for each component of confidence, and calculating factor scores to create a single index (for a fuller discussion see Bradford and Jackson 2008). The advantages of using this technique – versus using the standard factor analysis procedure offered by SPSS (for example) – are twofold. First, ordinal latent trait analysis treats the indicators as ordinal categorical variables (rather than treating them as continuous). Second, full information maximum likelihood estimation draws upon all the available information, meaning cases with some missing values are not dropped from the analysis.

Measuring police visibility and feeling informed

Respondents were asked how often they see the police patrolling in their area, both on foot or bicycle and in vehicles. Scores were combined in one index using an ordinal trait model and full information maximum likelihood estimation. Respondents were also asked how well informed they felt about what the police in their neighbourhood have been doing in the past year, and how well informed they felt about what the police in London have been doing. Again, scores were combined in one index using the same statistical technique.

Measuring fear of crime and neighbourhood concerns

Fear of crime was measured using standard BCS measures: how worried people are about being burgled, mugged/robbed, physically attacked in the street by a stranger,

and insulted/pestered in the street?[7] Concerns about disorder were measured by asking respondents how much of a problem a range of behaviours and conditions were in their area (e.g. teenagers hanging around in streets, vandalism/graffiti and people being drunk/rowdy). Concerns about social cohesion were measured via a series of agree/disagree statements that focused on whether the neighbourhood was 'close-knit', contained individuals who could be trusted, who got on with each other, shared values, and were willing to help each other. Concerns about collective efficacy were measured by asking respondents how likely they thought it was that neighbours would intervene if children were spray painting graffiti or a fight were to break out in front of their house. As before, individual indices were constructed for each of fear of crime, disorder, cohesion and collective efficacy, using ordinal trait models and full information maximum likelihood estimation.

Results

Over the six quarters of 2005/6 and 2006/7, 15% of the sample reported initiating contact with the police in the previous 12 months, while 5% reported experiencing police-initiated contact (Table 1). Half of all self-initiated contacts were initiated to report a crime as the victim, while around a sixth were to report a crime as a witness. Around two-thirds of all police-initiated contacts were car or foot-stops.

Self-initiated contact

People from different socio-demographic groups had different rates of contact with the police. Table 2 shows the proportions of people from a number of different social, demographic and economic groups who initiated contact with the police in the previous 12 months, demonstrating considerable variation at the bivariate level.

Table 1. Proportion of Londoners who experienced contact with the police in the last 12 months: by type of contact.

	Percentages	
	As percentage of total sample	As percentage of all contacts
Self-initiated		
Reported crime as victim	7	50
Reported crime as witness	2	17
Reported ASB/other concern	1	6
Other self-initiated contact	7	32
Any self-initiated contact	15	100
Police-initiated		
Stopped in car/on foot	3	63
Searched or arrested	1	17
Other police-initiated contact	2	35
Any police-initiated contact	5	100

Unweighted $n = 11,525$.
Note: percentages in column one do not sum to total since respondents could have more than one type of contact in each category.
Source: London Metropolitan Police Public Attitude Survey 2005/06; 2006/07.

Table 2. Proportion of Londoners who experienced contact with the police in the last 12 months: by socio-demographic characteristic.

	Percentages				Percentages		
	Self-initiated	Police-initiated	Unweighted (numbers)		Self-initiated	Police-initiated	Unweighted (numbers)
Men	14	7	5166	Car access	16	5	8066
Women	15	3	6359	No car access	12	3	3459
15–24	14	9	1249	A	7	1	279
25–34	13	4	2107	B	18	5	1406
35–44	17	5	2329	C1	15	5	3854
45–54	19	5	1732	C2	14	5	2666
55–64	15	2	1471	D	14	5	1041
65+	10	2	2584	E	12	4	2017
White British/Irish	14	4	7619	Owner/Occupier	16	4	6405
Mixed	20	8	467	Council tenant	11	4	2256
Indian Hindu	14	7	314	Housing Association tenant	14	4	837
Indian Muslim	15	5	157	Private tenant	13	6	1514
Indian Sikh	30	12	61	Other	16	8	513
Pakistani	9	7	338				
Bangladeshi	9	4	249	Victim of crime in last 12 months	60	14	1434
Black Caribbean	15	8	552	Not victim of crime in last 12 months	7	3	10,091
Black African	11	5	484				
Other ethnic group	18	5	1280	Experience self-initiated contact		14	1630
				Experienced police-initiated contact	43		450

Source: London Metropolitan Police Public Attitude Survey 2005/06; 2006/07.

We complemented this analysis with logistic regression modelling to investigate the independent association of specific characteristics with the odds of having initiated contact.[8] Unsurprisingly, having been a victim of crime was the single most important factor in predicting whether a person had done so. Net of victimisation, the following characteristics were also independently associated (at the 5% significance level) with greater odds of having initiated contact: being from the 35 to 64 age group; being from the Mixed ethnic group; having a limiting long term disability; and having experienced police-initiated contact. In contrast, being from the Pakistani or Bangladeshi ethnic groups; being a council tenant; and being from social class A were independently associated with lower chances of having initiated contact. There was also a suggestion (result significant at the 10% significance level) that being from the Black African ethnic group was associated with lower odds of self-initiated contact, as was being from social classes B or C1.

Police-initiated contact

Table 2 replicates the picture of police-initiated contact gleaned from successive BCS reports and elsewhere: rates of such contact were higher among males, the young, and those from an ethnic minority group. The rate was also significantly higher among those who had been victims of crime in the past 12 months and those who had initiated contact with the police themselves (two groups which often overlap).

We again conducted a logistic regression analysis that predicted the chances of having experienced police-initiated contact in the past year.[9] A number of characteristics were independently associated at the 5% significance level with increased chances of such contact, namely: being male; aged under 55 (with those in the youngest (15–24) age group the most likely); from the Mixed, Indian Hindu, Indian Sikh and Black Caribbean ethnic groups; having access to a car; being employed part-time or a student (although this latter result was significant only at the 10% significance level); living in private rented accommodation; having been a victim of crime in the past year; and having initiated contact with the police in the past 12 months. Being from social class A was associated with a lower risk of police-initiated contact.

Perceptions of the quality of contacts

We now turn to examine how encounters with the police were judged. Londoners were, overall, broadly satisfied with police handling of the contacts they experienced (see Figure 1). When asked to assess the most recent, 55% of those who had reported a crime were either completely, very or fairly satisfied, rising to 58% of witnesses and 77% of those who contacted the police to ask for information. In contrast, 32% victims were fairly, very or completely dissatisfied; dissatisfaction rates for the other types of self-initiated contacts were lower. Satisfaction was greater among those who experienced police-initiated contact. Some 59% of those stopped, searched or arrested were satisfied with the way the police conducted themselves, with only 16% dissatisfied, although it should be noted that nearly a quarter (23%) responded 'don't know'. Fully 72% of those who experienced other types of police-initiated contact said they were satisfied.

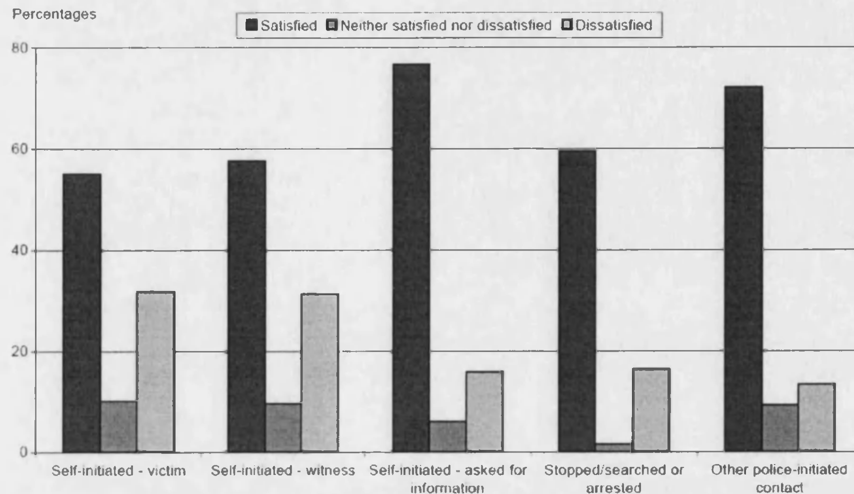

Figure 1. Satisfaction with the service provided by the police: by type of contact.

While these results suggest that a majority of people who come into contact with the police are satisfied with the way the encounter is handled, a significant proportion were dissatisfied with the way the encounter was handled. To investigate further, we assessed factors or characteristics associated with increased chances of dissatisfaction. We concentrate here on contacts initiated by victims of crime, primarily because of the low numbers in the METPAS sample who experienced other types of contact.

Table 3 shows the results of two binary logistic regression models predicting dissatisfaction with contacts among victims.[10] The models predict answers to the question (considering the most recent contact): 'Taking the whole experience into account, are you satisfied, dissatisfied or neither with the service provided by the police?' An odds ratio above one implies that the coefficient in question was associated with a greater chance of answering either fairly, very or completely dissatisfied. The first model includes as covariates only assessments of what happened during the contact itself (ease of contact, waiting time, police attitudes and behaviour), while the second includes socio-demographic and other variables to examine whether these had independent associations with dissatisfaction once assessments of the encounter itself were taken into account.

Considering only assessments of the contact (Model 1 in Table 3), whether the police 'took the matter seriously' appeared to have by far the largest influence on assessments of contact, with the response 'not at all' associated with much greater odds of being dissatisfied to some extent. Even feeling the police did not take the matter 'entirely' seriously was associated with greater odds of dissatisfaction. Police response time was the next most important factor, although even 'police never dealt' had a somewhat smaller impact than not taking the matter entirely seriously, let alone not taking it seriously at all. It is worth noting that in this context 'police never dealt' implies a failure to follow up after contact (probably by phone) was initially made. Aside from the sheer scale of the effect of not feeling that the police took the matter seriously, the key point is perhaps that negative assessments in all four areas covered – ease of contact, waiting time, whether the police took the matter seriously, and follow up – were associated with negative assessments overall. Getting even one

Table 3. Binary logistic regression predicting dissatisfaction with police contact among victims (1=dissatisfied, 0=satisfied or neither).

	Model 1			Model 2		
	EXP (B)	95% CI		EXP (B)	95% CI	
Ease of contact (ref: very)						
Fairly easy	1.933**	1.127	3.316	2.163**	1.198	3.905
Not easy	2.720***	1.284	5.760	3.768***	1.662	8.544
Other	1.027	0.391	2.696	0.958	0.344	2.673
Waiting time (ref: no wait)						
Reasonable	1.368	0.678	2.762	1.280	0.591	2.775
Not reasonable	5.943***	3.221	10.967	7.256***	3.683	14.293
Police never dealt	6.083***	2.353	15.725	6.704***	2.368	18.982
Other	2.829**	1.148	6.973	3.383**	1.281	8.930
Did police take matter seriously (ref: yes)						
Not entirely	7.883***	4.694	13.239	8.970***	5.067	15.878
Not at all	40.778***	16.437	101.161	63.616***	22.213	182.194
Don't know	3.594***	1.411	9.158	4.233***	1.440	12.441
Police follow up (ref: told what they'd done)						
Contacted for other reason	2.781**	1.242	6.225	3.764***	1.513	9.363
None	4.268***	2.422	7.523	6.758***	3.534	12.923
Not necessary/applicable	1.313	0.591	2.919	1.445	0.597	3.498
Don't know	1.636	0.439	6.088	2.503	0.552	11.362
IMD Ward deprivation level (higher scores=less deprived)				1.000	0.998	1.001
Stopped by police in last year (ref: no)						
Yes				1.637	0.441	6.079
Initiated other type of contact (ref: no)						
Yes				0.332***	0.149	0.738
Crime experience (ref: property theft/damage)						
Theft from the person				1.453	0.763	2.767
Assault				1.684	0.893	3.175
Domestic abuse (ref: no)						
Yes				0.128**	0.025	0.666
Victimised because of race, faith, sexual orientation or disability (ref: no)						
Yes				0.465	0.135	1.603

Note: Model 2 also controlled for sex, age, ethnic group, employment status, social class and car access. For full results see Bradford and Jackson (2008).
Source: London Metropolitan Public Attitude Survey 2005/2006; 2006/2007.
Unweighted bases: Model 1=811; Model 2=792.
*p <0.1; **p <0.05; ***p <0.01.

aspect of an encounter wrong may result in dissatisfaction, and if that aspect is perceived seriousness it is very likely to do so.

Model 2 (Table 3) shows the results from the regression analysis which included socio-demographic and other control variables. Two key points emerge. First, compared with Model 1 the coefficients for ease of contact, waiting time, whether the police took the matter seriously and follow up are almost unchanged (although the coefficient for 'not at all seriously' increases in size dramatically, it was already so large this change is of little real significance). This suggests that assessments of encounters among victims are largely independent of the other variables included in the model, or, to put it another way, the importance of these factors is fairly similar for all Londoners. Perhaps people who involve the police by reporting a victimisation call on them for different needs at each contact. When reporting a crime, for example, some victims may expect sympathy or the demonstration of investigative competence (or both), while others may only want to report an incident to gain a crime incident number for an insurance claim and thus not expect an 'investigation' per se. People therefore bring different expectations of the police as a public service resource to each encounter, and these expectations may be broadly independent of socio-demographic factors. The second point supports this suggestion: very few of the socio-demographic and other variables in the model had independent effects on the odds of dissatisfaction, although having initiated another type of contact with the police (for example, as a witness or to ask for information) was strongly associated with a much lower chance of dissatisfaction. One interpretation of this would be that those who have had a good experience of contact as a victim are subsequently more likely to contact the police for another reason. Finally, the type of crime experienced did not appear to have much independent influence, although having been the victim of domestic abuse was associated with a significantly *lower* chance of being dissatisfied.

The impact of contact on overall judgements of satisfaction

Overall levels of trust and confidence reported in the METPAS are similar to those reported in the BCS and elsewhere (Fitzgerald *et al.* 2002, Allen *et al.* 2006). Just under three-fifths (57%) of Londoners felt their local police were doing an excellent or good job, while nearly two thirds (63%) felt the same way about the 'London-wide' police (see Table 4). However, that the police 'in London' were rated more highly than the local police is contrary to the pattern found in the BCS where both local and general police are rated roughly the same (Allen *et al.* 2006, Table 2). This may be due to the strong 'brand image' of the Met police, and is related, we suggest, to the wider delivery of 'safety and security' in London. For instance, in the survey quarter conducted in the aftermath of the July 2005 bombings, 72% of Londoners reported that police in London do a good/excellent job. Also consistent with other findings, the METPAS found that those who had had personal contact in the previous 12 months gave both local and London-wide police a lower rating than those who had had no such contact. Only 6% of those who had had no contact rated their local police as poor or very poor, while nearly three times as many (16%) of those who had self-initiated contact gave the same rating. Ratings of the London-wide police followed a similar pattern.

Table 4. Rating of police: by satisfaction with contact.

	Excellent/ good	Fair	Poor/very poor	Percentages Unweighted base (numbers)
Local police				
No self-initiated contact	59	35	6	8946
Contact and satisfied	55	36	9	1161
Contact and dissatisfied	21	39	41	316
No police-initiated contact	57	35	8	10,026
Contact and satisfied	52	38	10	346
Contact and dissatisfied	38	33	29	51
All people	57	35	8	10,423
London police				
No self-initiated contact	64	32	4	8749
Contact and satisfied	58	35	7	1072
Contact and dissatisfied	35	42	23	295
No police-initiated contact	63	33	4	9734
Contact and satisfied	59	32	9	333
Contact and dissatisfied	57	33	10	49
All people	63	33	5	10,116

Note: 'Satisfied' includes respondents who replied 'neither'.
Source: London Metropolitan Police Public Attitude Survey 2005/2006; 2006/2007.

Regression analyses predicting ratings of the local and London-wide police broadly supported the asymmetry argument.[11] Net of other factors, dissatisfaction with a contact was associated with a lower rating of the police, an effect which was stronger for self-initiated contacts and for the local police, while positive impacts from satisfactory contacts were smaller or non-existent. However, the models did suggest that contacts which are handled well may have a small positive impact on overall trust and confidence in some circumstances. Specifically, satisfactory self-initiated contacts were associated with a small but significant increase in the chances of giving an excellent rating to the local police, while satisfactory police-initiated contacts were associated with increased likelihoods of rating both the local and London-wide police as excellent. It should be noted that the impact of this satisfactory contact appeared to be a small movement from 'good' to 'excellent', and there was no associated movement from fair to good or from poor to fair. In other words, it may be that satisfactory contact improves already favourable opinions but has less impact on more neutral or negative opinions. The METPAS data therefore suggest that, while it is undoubtedly present, asymmetry in the impact of judgements about contact with the police maybe less severe than has been suggested, and, in this case at least, that 'satisfactory' police behaviour may be 'rewarded' with a small boost in levels of trust and confidence.

The impact of contact on different aspects of trust and confidence

We now turn to examine the associations between contact and views about police effectiveness, fairness and community engagement. Recall that the studies reported

by Skogan (2006) operationalised public confidence using an index of public satisfaction with police effectiveness and engagement. Here we add attitudes towards police fairness, and treat the three components separately. Furthermore, in addition to respondent's views about their local area and community, we also add as explanatory variables judgements about the visibility of the police and whether respondents feel informed about police activities. Results from a series of linear regression models examining these relationships are shown in Table 5.

Perhaps the most important finding shown in Table 5 is that both types of contact, whether judged satisfactory or unsatisfactory, were associated with more negative views of police effectiveness. While the magnitude of impact was similar, different underlying causes may be suggested. For police-initiated encounters, many people stopped or searched may feel themselves undeserving of such attention and/or that scarce police resources could be more effectively used elsewhere. Even if the encounter itself went well, these feelings might still translate into a lower opinion of police effectiveness. In contrast, initiating an encounter with the police seems likely to confront members of the public with the near impossible task the police have in, for example, tracking down stolen goods or providing immediate answers to problems of anti-social behaviour – thus, even though the contact (and by extension the behaviour of the officers concerned) is judged to be satisfactory, a more negative assessment of police effectiveness results.

Perceived low levels of police visibility and lack of information were both linked to lower opinions of police effectiveness. In the case of the former this is hardly surprising given the preference for increasing foot patrols among large sections of the public (Roberts and Hough 2005) and the way that foot patrol is treated in political discourse as *the* signal task or role of the police. That a perceived lack of information was also associated with less favourable views of effectiveness could be taken to suggest that the provision of information is seem as an important part of the police's role. However, it seems more likely that those who have received information have a better opinion of police effectiveness, underlining the importance to the police of not only being seen to do their job (by being visible), but also of communicating properly with the public.

Turning to views about police fairness, negatively assessed self- and police-initiated contacts again had strong negative associations with opinions, but, for this aspect of trust and confidence, positively assessed self-initiated contacts were associated with small but significant improvements in opinion. There was no association between positively assessed police-initiated contacts and views about fairness. Perceived low level levels of visibility were associated with less favourable views about police fairness – however feeling relatively *well* informed about the police was also associated with more negative views. This may be because those who feel they have higher levels of awareness of broader policing issues take more account of recent policing scandals such as the Stephen Lawrence case and the shooting of Juan Carlos de Menezes.

Finally, dissatisfaction with contact was negatively associated with views around police community engagement, with unsatisfactory contacts of both type appearing to have broadly similar impacts. But a level of symmetry was again in evidence, in that satisfactory self-initiated contacts were associated with a modest but statistically significant uplift in opinions. As with views about police effectiveness, perceiving a

Table 5. Linear regression models predicting scores for the three components of trust and confidence (high scores=less favourable opinions).

	Police effectiveness			Police fairness			Police community engagement		
	B	95% CI		B	95% CI		B	95% CI	
Sex (ref: male)									
Female	−0.059***	−0.088	−0.030	−0.026	−0.058	−0.005	−0.063***	−0.093	−0.032
Age (ref: 65 and over)									
15–17	0.218***	0.089	0.346	0.230***	0.092	0.369	0.117*	−0.017	0.251
18–21	0.148***	0.063	0.232	0.211***	0.120	0.301	0.131***	0.044	0.219
22–34	0.148***	0.096	0.201	0.166***	0.110	0.222	0.120***	0.066	0.174
35–44	0.099***	0.047	0.152	0.138***	0.081	0.194	0.070**	0.016	0.125
45–54	0.143***	0.088	0.197	0.161***	0.103	0.220	0.124***	0.067	0.180
55–64	0.096***	0.045	0.148	0.133***	0.078	0.189	0.112***	0.059	0.166
Ethnic group (ref: White British/Irish)									
Mixed	0.009	−0.061	0.079	0.179***	0.103	0.255	−0.001	−0.074	0.072
Indian Hindu	−0.108**	−0.191	−0.026	−0.317***	−0.406	−0.228	−0.253***	−0.339	−0.167
Indian Muslim	−0.057	−0.172	0.058	−0.020	−0.144	0.103	−0.056	−0.176	0.063
Indian Sikh	−0.075	−0.257	0.106	0.106	−0.090	0.302	0.098	−0.092	0.287
Pakistani	−0.160***	−0.241	−0.080	−0.087**	−0.174	−0.001	−0.084**	−0.167	0.000
Bangladeshi	−0.010	−0.104	0.084	0.060	−0.041	0.161	0.004	−0.094	0.101
Black Caribbean	0.040	−0.024	0.104	0.101***	0.032	0.170	0.020	−0.046	0.086
Black African	−0.090**	−0.159	−0.022	−0.045	−0.119	0.030	−0.171***	−0.242	−0.099
Other ethnic group	−0.046**	−0.090	−0.001	−0.092***	−0.140	−0.044	−0.092***	−0.138	−0.045
Car access (ref: no)									
Yes	0.075***	0.043	0.107	0.048***	0.013	0.083	0.110***	0.077	0.144
Limiting disability (ref: no)									
Yes	0.018	−0.028	0.063	−0.142***	−0.191	−0.094	−0.078***	−0.125	−0.031
Employment status (ref: employed full-time)									
Part-time	0.060**	0.002	0.118	0.014	−0.048	0.076	0.082***	0.022	0.142
Unemployed	0.041	−0.027	0.109	−0.046	−0.120	0.027	−0.038	−0.109	0.033
Economically inactive	0.067***	0.025	0.109	−0.045*	−0.090	0.001	−0.016	−0.060	0.028
Student	0.058	−0.018	0.135	−0.068	−0.150	0.014	−0.050	−0.129	0.030
Other	0.059	−0.050	0.169	−0.018	−0.136	0.100	−0.016	−0.130	0.098
Social class (ref: D and E)									
A and B	0.086***	0.038	0.134	−0.002	−0.054	0.050	0.010	−0.040	0.060
C1 and C2	0.019	−0.016	0.055	−0.004	−0.043	0.034	−0.013	−0.050	0.024
Victim of crime in last year (ref: no)									
Yes	0.034	−0.015	0.082	−0.083***	−0.135	−0.031	−0.005	−0.056	0.045
Rank of Ward IMD (low value=more deprived)	−0.0003***	0.000	0.000	−0.0003***	0.000	0.000	−0.0002***	0.000	0.000
Contact with police in last year (ref: no)									
Self-initiated and satisfied	0.055**	0.008	0.103	−0.073***	−0.124	−0.022	−0.052**	−0.101	−0.002
Self-initiated and dissatisfied	0.348***	0.263	0.434	0.436***	0.344	0.528	0.533***	0.443	0.622
Police-initiated and satisfied	0.156***	0.080	0.231	−0.044	−0.125	0.037	0.013	−0.065	0.092
Police-initiated and dissatisfied	0.389***	0.205	0.574	0.544***	0.344	0.743	0.324***	0.131	0.517
Opinions of local area (high scores=worse opinions)									
Community cohesion	0.046***	0.029	0.064	0.115***	0.097	0.134	0.125***	0.108	0.143
Collective efficacy	0.067***	0.050	0.083	0.046***	0.028	0.063	0.080***	0.063	0.097
Fear of crime	0.071***	0.053	0.088	0.014	−0.004	0.033	0.051***	0.033	0.069
Perception of disorder	0.153***	0.136	0.169	0.102***	0.084	0.120	0.151***	0.134	0.168
Perceptions of police visibility (high score=less visible)	0.271***	0.254	0.288	0.131***	0.112	0.149	0.226***	0.208	0.244
How well informed feels (high score=less well informed)	0.094***	0.077	0.111	−0.032***	−0.051	−0.014	0.069***	0.051	0.087

Note: 'Satisfied' contact includes 'neither' responses.
Source: London Metropolitan Police Public Attitude Survey 2005/2006; 2006/2007.
Unweighted base=11,232.
Summary of response variables:
Effectiveness: Mean=0.001; SD=0.815; Range (−2.031, 3.081).
Fairness: Mean=0.001; SD=0.824; Range (−1.596, 2.619).
Community engagement: Mean=−0.017; SD=0.841; Range (−1.905, 2.530).
*$p < 0.1$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$.

relatively low level of visibility and feeling less well informed about police activities were both associated with less favourable views about community engagement.

Associations between views about the police and some of the other variables included in the models shown in Table 5 are also worthy of comment. Women had somewhat better opinions of police effectiveness and community engagement, while being in the 65 and over age group was associated with more favourable views across all three components. Where the views of ethnic minority groups varied from those in the White/British Irish reference category this was generally in a positive direction, with one notable exception: opinions about police fairness were significantly lower in the Mixed and Black Caribbean groups, although this was not the case for effectiveness and engagement. Net of all the other variables in the models car use was consistently associated with less favourable opinions, with the suggestion that ideas about community engagement were most affected. Girling *et al.* (2000) discuss the irritation which traffic policing provoked among their mainly middle-class respondents, concluding that it undermined their sense of ownership of the police, and represented to them a misdirection of police resources away from those who should be targeted. Finally, having been a victim of crime in the last year was associated with a *more favourable* opinion of police fairness, but had little apparent impact on the other components.

Ideas about the nature and character of their local area also influenced respondent's ideas about the police. In almost every case more negative opinions about the local area were significantly associated with less favourable ratings with, it seems, perceptions of local disorder having the greatest impact. It is perhaps not surprising that people who feel their area is suffering from crime and disorder may have lower opinions of the police; however, the data also demonstrate that doubting the cohesion and collective efficacy of one's neighbourhood may also be linked to more negative views. Two further points are of note. Firstly, community cohesion appears to be more important in this respect than collective efficacy, and ideas about cohesion impact more on fairness and engagement than effectiveness. Someone who feels part of their local community and that others around them do also is likely to have a more favourable view of the police than someone who does not. Secondly, these 'neighbourhood' effects are net of the level of deprivation of the respondent's ward as measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (ODPM 2004), suggesting that it is subjective appraisals of the condition of the local area which are important in influencing views about the police.

To sum up, then, by decomposing trust and confidence we can begin to tease out some potential explanations for the apparent asymmetry in the effects of contact, but also provide evidence that in some cases the effect may in fact be somewhat symmetrical. We find that any type of contact, self- or police-initiated, satisfactory or unsatisfactory, is associated with significantly worse views of effectiveness. As suggested above, this may be the result of confronting individuals with the inability of the police on many occasions to 'fight crime' in any demonstrable way (as opposed, for example, to simply taking details and giving a crime reference number), or with what they perceive to be a misuse of scarce resources, directed at themselves rather than elsewhere. It is often remarked that although the central task of the police is held to be the fight against crime, there is very often little officers on the ground can do about any one particular crime (Manning 1997). In such

circumstances there is little the police can do to improve opinions, while circumstances may often conspire to damage them.

Skogan (2006) defined confidence as, jointly, effectiveness and engagement. The discussion above implies that negative impacts from contact on confidence operate through ideas across both components, but with particular emphasis on effectiveness. However, the bi-directional results for fairness and community engagement shown here suggest that positive experiences during contacts can boost general opinions of the police across these two components of trust and confidence. Furthermore, when individuals report that they regularly see the police patrolling by foot and in cars, and when they feel well informed about police actions, they may be more likely to judge the police as fair, effective and engaged with the community (although note the negative impact of feeling informed on ideas about fairness). This is net of specific encounters with the police, fear of crime, concerns about neighbourhood disorder, cohesion and collective efficacy, and a host of other variables including victimisation, local crime levels, gender, age and ethnicity. It has often been remarked that policing contains a strong dramaturgical element (Manning 2001), and the results shown here demonstrate the importance for the police of visible displays not only of their presence on the streets, but of the work they are doing (through the provision of information). Furthermore, apprehendable demonstrations by officers of appropriate behaviour, and serious treatment of people's problems, appears to be vital.

As shown above different aspects of an encounter – ease of contact, whether the police took the matter seriously, follow up contact – contribute differentially to overall assessments of satisfaction, with being taken seriously by the police being by far the most important factor. To investigate how judgements about specific aspects of encounters may feed through into overall trust and confidence, we repeated the analysis above, looking this time only at victims of crime who contacted the police. We were thus able to examine associations between different elements of the overall contact experience and the three components of trust and confidence. Results are shown in Table 6.

The data shown in Table 6 suggest two things: that for victims of crime what happened during their contact with the police had more impact on their views about community engagement than on ideas about fairness and especially effectiveness; and that being taken seriously by the police emerges as the most important single element across all three components. Opinions about seriousness of treatment, follow up and, to a lesser extent, ease of contact certainly did impact on views of effectiveness (although the coefficient for 'contact-not easy' was significant only at the 10% level). However, seriousness of treatment appears to have had a considerably greater impact on views about fairness, while the coefficient for 'contact-not easy' is now strongly significant. The procedural justice model predicts that the police being seen to take individuals seriously communicates fairness and a shared group membership, and ease of contact might be considered in a similar light – a police force which was hard to contact would be sending a very definite message to those it policed about their relative worth or position. Also in line with the predictions of the procedural justice model, follow up appears only weakly associated with fairness judgements, since when it comes to notions of equitable treatment process is valued over outcome. In contrast there were significant associations between all four elements of the contact process and views about community engagement with, again,

Table 6. Linear regression models predicting scores for the three components of trust and confidence: victims only (high scores=less favourable opinions).

	Police effectiveness			Police fairness			Police community engagement		
	B	95% CI		B	95% CI		B	95% CI	
Ease of contact (ref: very easy)									
Fairly easy	0.151**	0.023	0.279	0.145*	−0.009	0.300	0.083	−0.064	0.229
Not easy	0.169*	−0.021	0.359	0.334***	0.104	0.564	0.269**	0.051	0.487
Other	−0.046	−0.290	0.198	0.082	−0.213	0.377	−0.008	−0.287	0.271
Waiting time (ref: none)									
Reasonable	0.011	−0.143	0.166	0.143	−0.043	0.330	0.222*	0.045	0.398
Unreasonable	0.029	−0.137	0.196	0.096	−0.105	0.297	0.257***	0.067	0.448
Police never dealt	−0.194	−0.440	0.053	−0.208	−0.505	0.090	0.031	−0.251	0.313
Other	0.037	−0.202	0.276	0.236	−0.053	0.525	0.347**	0.074	0.621
Treatment by police (ref: taken seriously)									
Taken fairly seriously	0.223***	0.066	0.380	0.354***	0.164	0.544	0.391***	0.211	0.571
Not taken seriously	0.330***	0.120	0.540	0.574***	0.321	0.827	0.577***	0.337	0.817
Don't know	−0.064	−0.353	0.225	0.288	−0.061	0.637	0.280*	−0.051	0.610
Follow up contact (ref: yes)									
Contacted for other reason	0.007	−0.202	0.217	0.136	−0.117	0.390	0.033	−0.207	0.273
None	0.167**	0.020	0.315	0.172*	−0.006	0.350	0.272***	0.103	0.441
Not applicable	0.028	−0.155	0.210	−0.026	−0.246	0.194	0.076	−0.132	0.285
Don't know	0.215	−0.179	0.609	0.202	−0.274	0.678	0.173	−0.278	0.624

Note: Models also controlled for sex, age, ethnic group, car access, employment status and social class, ward IMD rank, other contact with the police, type of crime experienced, opinions of local area, perceptions of police visibility, and how well informant felt about police. For full results see Bradford and Jackson (2008).
Source: London Metropolitan Police Public Attitude Survey 2005/2006; 2006/2007.
Unweighted base=737.
Summary of response variables:
Effectiveness: Mean=0.374; SD=0.874; Range (−2.031, 3.081).
Fairness: Mean=0.143; SD=1.011; Range (−1.596, 2.619).
Community engagement: Mean=0.283; SD=1.037; Range (−1.905, 2.530).
*p <0.1; **p <0.05; ***p <0.01.

not being taken seriously having the greatest single impact. Waiting time in this context might stand as a measure of the perceived responsiveness of the police and the importance they place on demands from the community (in this instance, being called to assist a victim of crime). Ease of contact might represent something similar, or the perceived availability of the police to offer assistance, while seriousness of treatment may communicate that the police are interested in and engaged with a person, and through them others in a similar position.

For crime victims, then, while all elements of the contact process can be important in influencing views of the police, the relationship between contact and confidence appears to flow more through the processes with which police interact with people (as demonstrated by the length of time taken to deal with the matter and seriousness of treatment) than on the outcomes they can offer (for which police follow up may be regarded as a proxy). In other words, the METPAS data provide tentative support for the procedural justice model. That some ideas about the police are more amenable to change through personal contact than others is also reiterated, with the level of association between experiences during contact and opinions highest for community engagement. This may be because messages about community engagement, and fairness, can be demonstrated by and through personal contact to a greater extent than can those about effectiveness, or, to put it another way, it appears that community engagement in particular can be demonstrated during almost any contact, while this may well not be the case for effectiveness.

Summary and conclusions

Our analysis highlights – in line with other elements of the emerging literature on public encounters with the police in the UK – the specific role that badly received contact has on the three specific components of trust and confidence. In line with the asymmetry argument, negatively received contact was associated with more negative attitudes towards specific aspects of police behaviour: effectiveness, fairness and level of community engagement. As Skogan (2006) argues, this is hardly surprising given the difficulties facing the police in much of the work they do. Yet our findings do not fully endorse asymmetry. By defining public confidence in a more sophisticated way, we were able to identify a positive association between positively received contact on specific and separate attitudes towards both police fairness and level of engagement with the community.

Just as the consequences of contact for ideas about police effectiveness, community engagement and fairness are variable, the ability of individual officers to enhance or damage perceptions during contacts with the public also differs across the three components. While opinions about police effectiveness may be challenged by any contact – whether it is satisfactory or unsatisfactory – ideas about fairness and community engagement appear to be amenable to change in either a positive *or* negative direction. Any positive effect from satisfactory contact on overall opinions of the police is therefore likely to be mediated by improved perceptions of police fairness and community engagement. The procedural justice model focuses on the relationships between procedural fairness, legitimacy, cooperation with the police and compliance with the law (Lind and Tyler 1988, Tyler and Huo 2002, Sunshine and Tyler 2003a,b, Tyler 1990, 2004, 2006). We propose that the uplift identified is important given the crucial role that fairness plays in shaping legitimacy.

Fairness and community engagement not only represent an obvious concern among the public with police impartiality, even-handedness and responsiveness; they are also the aspects of overall confidence which is most clearly related to *personal* treatment during an encounter. Tyler and others argue that fairness, decency and attentiveness are things which can be shown on almost any occasion by police officers or staff through their actions (or inactions), demeanour and other behaviour, and are also aspects of police behaviour which individual officers can improve. This is a key element of the procedural justice model, as is the idea (also tentatively supported by the METPAS data) that judgements about personal contact are based more on the processes involved than on outcomes. This paper therefore suggests that parts of the procedural justice model may apply in a UK context.

The implication of the discussion is that because it may be difficult for officers to demonstrate effectiveness at the level of personal contact, and rather easy for them to display apparent shortcomings, an *asymmetry* in associations between contact and this variable results. In contrast officers have greater opportunities to demonstrate fairness and to a lesser extent community engagement, and this leads to a more *symmetrical* impact from contact on these aspect of trust and confidence. By utilising these separate components in the analysis we can begin to understand why the overall impact of contact appears to be negative – in regard to one aspect of trust and confidence it is not possible to display positive behaviours to such an extent that improved general opinions result. Furthermore, even where there is some symmetry, the magnitude of potential negative impacts is far larger than that of potential positive impacts. Despite this, the picture is not entirely bleak from a police perspective, since contacts do contain the potential to improve aspects of public trust and confidence and perhaps induce the benefits that are held to flow from this.

Moreover, we find that perceptions about the visibility of the police and how informed people feel are also linked to judgements about effectiveness, fairness and community engagement. These findings must be viewed in the light of the seemingly insatiable desire among the public for more 'bobbies on the beat', and certainly suggest that if people perceive a growth in patrol activity their opinions of the police will improve across the board. However, in the current context the importance of these more ephemeral forms of 'contact' may go beyond this, since our results suggest that opinions of police effectiveness can be enhanced by better communication and increased visibility. Arguably, it may be easier for police to improve visibility and communication than contact experiences.

Finally, results of this work are being fed back to advise the Metropolitan police on the improvement of its service to the public. While there may be academic scepticism about the Whitehall approach to thinking about and treating the police as 'customer service providers', we might be more assured that what people value about police encounters is how they are treated. The bottom line in terms of evidence for improvement is that 'contact matters', and that such contact – no matter how slight – can leave an impression. Indeed, this has been the key message in filtering the results back to serving police officers. While the odds may seem stacked against them, the message is that, quite aside from ethical and legal imperatives to treat members of the public with dignity and respect, personal contact holds the possibility of affecting change across a wide range of opinions about the police; and potentially, at least, in positive directions.

Notes

1. For a Conservative viewpoint, see Police Reform Taskforce (2007).
2. Fitzgerald *et al.* (2002) did not address the impact of public encounters with the police on public confidence in police fairness and effectiveness. In fact the *2000 Policing for London* survey also measured levels of public support for the police – intentions to report crimes that they witnessed, intentions to give evidence in court, etc. However, analyses of the relationships between public encounters with the police, public confidence and public support are not yet forthcoming.
3. Tyler and Fagan (2006) drew on data from a panel study to show that perceptions of the legitimacy of the police increased over time when New York City residents had been in contact with the police and were satisfied with their treatment. Strikingly, this was the case *even if the outcome was unfavourable.* However, Tyler and Fagan examined only the effect of contact on perceived police legitimacy (an overall index measured by asking respondents whether they felt they ought to obey the police, whether they had trust and confidence in police as an institution, and whether they respected the police as people and felt they shared values) rather than on specific attitudes towards effectiveness, fairness and community engagement. This is an important distinction because other work by Tyler and colleagues has shown that legitimacy is both empirically and conceptually distinct from judgements of procedural fairness (for example, Sunshine and Tyler 2003a,b).
4. The METPAS reports a significantly lower proportion of people having contact with the police in the last year than does the London-only sample of the BCS. The reason for this phenomenon is not clear – however, a comparison of METPAS and BCS data demonstrated that while the rates of contact differed between the two surveys, the distribution of contact across different population groups was broadly similar, as were the relative proportions of different types of contact (both surveys suggest that around half of all self-initiated contacts are to report a crime as the victim, for example). Comparison of the METPAS against 2001 Census data also suggested that there is no systematic bias in the sample which might affect reported rates of contact (such as an under-representation of young people).
5. The question 'what kind of a job do your (local) (police in London) do' is matched with the Police Performance Assessment Framework, and the results of this question are published on a quarterly basis for 43 police forces in England and Wales.
6. Confirmatory factor analysis confirmed that the empirical distinctiveness of these three components of confidence (Bradford and Jackson 2008). Using LISREL, a three-factor solution (one each for effectiveness, fairness and community engagement) fitted the data better than a two-factor solution (one for effectiveness and for fairness/community engagement combined).
7. It is preferable when measuring the fear of crime, however, to also include questions about the actual frequency with which individuals worry (Farrall and Gadd 2004, Jackson *et al.* 2007, Gray *et al.* in press). Unfortunately the METPAS only fielded standard measures, asking respondents how worried they were about falling victim of the different crimes. For a recent review of the fear of crime literature, see Farrall *et al.* (2007).
8. The results are not shown for reasons of space – see the full technical report that accompanies this paper (Bradford and Jackson 2008).
9. See the accompanying technical report (Bradford and Jackson 2008) for parameter estimates.
10. The response variable (satisfaction with the police contact) originally had 7 categories: completely, very or fairly satisfied; neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; and fairly, very or completely dissatisfied. We initially used ordinal regression to model the effects of a number of explanatory variables on a single ordinal response variable. The most common regression model for ordinal responses is the proportional odds model (we used the SPSS ordinal regression procedure, or PLUM, Polytomous Universal Model), and here one needs to test the proportional odds assumption before embarking on ordinal regression. The Brant (1990) test indicated that a number of explanatory variables violated this assumption, indicating that ordinal regression was not appropriate. We therefore recoded the response variable into two categories and proceeded with binary logistic regression.
11. See Bradford and Jackson (2008) for parameter estimates and discussion.

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INTERLUDE II

The second paper therefore appears to demonstrate the potential presence of a procedural justice effect in the London-wide data presented. But what is this nature of this effect? Do people living in London (and, we might assume, elsewhere in the UK) really value process over outcome? And what are the implications if they do, in terms of 'trust and confidence' and in terms of the procedural justice model itself, which links fair process, via enhanced legitimacy, to what for the police are highly desirable concrete outcomes, such as increased acceptance of officer's decision-making. The third paper below tackles some of these questions. The opinions of victims of crime who have had recent contact with the police are assessed, and associations with some of the outcomes above are outlined.

The analysis takes advantage of an unusual survey design which concentrates almost entirely on one specific event (or chain of events): how police dealt with a crime the respondent recently experienced. It capitalises on this in two ways. First, the main purpose is to uncover any associations between procedural fairness during the contact and higher reported levels of confidence, greater decision acceptance and so on at the end of it. In this the paper follows a long tradition of using cross-sectional snap-shots to infer processes which must by definition occur over time. The intention is to demonstrate the possibility of such effects, which later panel studies might confirm (or disprove). But at this stage, demonstration of association should be a robust enough finding in and of itself.

Second, the paper attempts to differentiate between diffuse and specific support for the police. It is recognised that this pushes, indeed probably breaks, the boundaries of interpretation when using cross-sectional data of the type presented. However the purpose again is not to 'prove' that diffuse support strongly affects but does not determine how contacts are experienced (for example), but to open up possibilities which, it is to be hoped, can be explored using more suitable data in the future.

PAPER THREE

The quality of police contact: procedural justice concerns among victims of crime in London

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Abstract

There is sustained academic and policy interest in the point of contact between the police and public, not least because reassurance and other policing strategies hope to improve the quality of these interactions and thus to enhance public trust and confidence in the police. It is therefore important to understand how people judge such encounters. What are the characteristics of a positively received contact, and what are the features of the encounter most important to subsequent confidence in policing? The procedural justice model developed by Tom Tyler and colleagues in the United States predicts that fair, decent and appropriate treatment – and not results – is key in securing public support for the police. By fostering feelings of procedural justice and motive-based trust, and indicating shared group membership, fair treatment is linked to improvements in police legitimacy. Using data from the Metropolitan Police's Crime Victims Survey this paper tests some of the key predictions of the model, and consistent evidence of a procedural justice effect is presented. Decent treatment and proper actions are consistently valued over outcomes and are associated with higher expected levels of confidence and greater acceptance of police actions and decisions. But police legitimacy is not simply created through contact, it exists prior to it. Easton's twin concepts of diffuse and specific support are used to unpack respondents' opinions. Levels of diffuse support are shown to affect the ways in which encounters are experienced and assessed.

Introduction

Contact between the police and public is fraught with potential meaning, difficulty and conflict. The ways in which officers treat those they encounter can communicate an individual's social position or status (Tyler 1990; Tyler and Huo 2002), respectability (Waddington 1999), even that person's relationship to a putative national order or 'community of feeling' (Loader and Mulcahy 2003). Personal contact is likewise a key moment in the formation of opinions about the police. Individual encounters can create moments in which the legitimacy of the police is reinforced or undermined (Tyler and Fagan 2008). The net negative relationship between personal contact and opinions of the police is well known in both the UK and the US. Survey after survey has found that the standing of the police is lower among those who have had recent contact than those who have not (Allen *et al.* 2006; FitzGerald et al 2002; Skogan 2006). Recent UK work has suggested that this overall negative effect is primarily to a large downward effect from poorly received contacts – well-received encounters appear to have a much smaller, although still discernable, uplifting effect on public confidence (Bradford, Jackson and Stanko 2009; c.f. Skogan 2006).

There is significant academic and policy interest in the point of contact between police and public (Barker 2001; Bradford, Jackson and Stanko 2009; Cooke 2005; Crawford 2007; Delsol and Shiner 2006; McAra and McVie 2005; Office of Public Service Reform 2003; Sharp and Atherton 2007; Skogan 2006; Viki et al 2006). Personal contact will inform ideas about the police not only among the individuals concerned but also among others who experience the encounter vicariously, either through personal accounts or through stories circulating within wider social groups (Miller et al 2004; Rosenbaum et al 2005). The range of contacts people have with the police; from serious criminal enquiries to asking an officer for directions, is vast. Public expectations, needs and desires will be equally diffuse. However one constant will be present in all such encounters – the officers themselves, representing, variously, law and order (Reiner 2000), continuity and community (Girling, Loader and Sparks 2000), the social group or order more loosely defined (Tyler 1990, Tyler and Huo 2002), or perhaps coercive state power (Neocleous 2000).

Improving the quality of police-public interactions is a key strand of current policing policy in the UK, providing arguably the most important component of policies aimed at meeting the new overarching PSA 23 confidence target (HM Treasury 2007). The current paper aims to contribute to the understanding of police-public interactions via an in-depth consideration of one particular type of contact, that between officers and crime victims. The

procedural justice model developed in the United States by Tyler and colleagues (Lind and Tyler 1988; Sunshine and Tyler 2003a; 2003b; Tyler 1990; 2006; Tyler and Huo 2002) provides the theoretical and practical lens through which the data are viewed. This 'process-based' model of police-community relations holds that the standing of the police among the public is reproduced or enhanced primarily through the experience of fair, equitable and decent treatment. During personal contacts individuals value fairness in decision-making and in the exercise of authority. Perceptions of fair process are causally linked to seeing the police as legitimate, worthy of respect, deference and cooperation, and the actions of officers are held to communicate and be read in the light of shared group membership and status; or, conversely, adversarial group relations. The procedural justice model has hitherto been applied primarily in the US. However there is emerging evidence of its relevance in the UK. Evidence for the influence of procedural concerns on contact satisfaction among crime victims in London as been reported (Bradford, Jackson and Stanko 2009), and the role of assessments of prior contacts in shaping reported propensities to cooperate with the police has also been noted (Viki et al. 2006). Wells (2008) discusses negative opinions of automated speed cameras among drivers in the light of their experience of such systems as procedurally *un*fair, while the place of procedural fairness in maintaining order in prisons has also been acknowledged (Sparks and Bottoms 1995).

This paper picks up from previous work assessing the potential effect of personal contact on opinions of the police (see, in particular, Bradford, Jackson and Stanko 2009) to examine in detail some of the key predictions of the procedural justice model in the context of face to face encounters between officers and public. Specifically, it tests the idea that the experience of procedural fairness is associated with both contact satisfaction and more favourable opinions of the police, and that procedurally fair processes can alter people's opinions for the better. In addition, for the first time using large-scale UK survey data, it tests the idea that fair treatment can enhance public acceptance of police actions and decisions. The weight of the evidence presented supports the existence and importance of a procedural justice effect across all the dimensions outlined above. Furthermore, as current policing policy insists the provision of reassurance is found to be of particular importance. The data also underline the importance of general orientations toward the police in assessments of officers and their actions, and that 'contextual' elements, such as opinions about crime and security, can affect how contacts are experienced and interpreted.

Police legitimacy and procedural justice

Legitimacy has been defined in many different ways by social theorists, although almost all have seen it as a key feature of social institutions, particularly in the context of the modern nation-state. Broad definitions have conceptualised legitimacy as a kind of auxiliary process which explains the stability of "any structure, at any level, that emerges and is maintained by other basic social processes" (Zelditch 2001: 40). Others have been more specific: Weber (1978) famously linked legitimacy to the power to command and duty to obey; for Habermas (1979), it represents a political order's worthiness to be recognised. Within the procedural justice framework the most commonly stated definition can be summarised:

> "Legitimacy is a property of an authority or institution that leads people to feel that authority or institution is entitled to be deferred to and obeyed. It represents an 'acceptance by people of the need to bring their behaviour into line with the dictates of an external authority'. " (Sunshine and Tyler 2003: 556; quoting Tyler 1990: 25)

According to the work of Tyler and colleagues,[4] the perceived quality of decision making and personal treatment of citizens by legal authorities are linked to feelings of both procedural justice and motive based trust, which are in turn associated with decision acceptance, satisfaction with the decision maker, and the legitimacy of the authority. Procedural justice is marked and demonstrated by transparency, fair, equitable and respectful treatment, following correct procedures, and a feeling of control (or 'voice' – Hirschman 1974) of the processes through which people are treated. Procedural concerns are consistently found to have a privileged position in public judgements of legal authorities; this is considered a positive finding because judgements about, for example, fairness in the distribution of resources will vary between social groups and are impossible to satisfy in every circumstance. Furthermore legal authorities are often unable to provide people with positive outcomes, meaning that satisfaction with their performance, if it is come, must be based on other criteria. Procedural justice approaches are also found to enhance the possibility of improving opinions about legal authorities, partially because fairness can be shown in many contexts where equitable distributions or positive outcomes cannot.

The concept of motive-based trust stems from the notion that the trustworthiness of organisations or institutions is founded less on their predictability and perceived

[4] I draw here primarily on Lind and Tyler 1988; Tyler 1990; Tyler and Huo 2002.

willingness or ability to keep promises – a conception of trust shared by theorists ranging from Luhman (1977) to Giddens (1991) – and more on estimates of character and affect, perceptions that the trusted have the best interests of the truster at heart. Motive-based trust is clearly linked to Barber's (1983) fiduciary trust, the idea that placing trust implies an expectation that the trustee will put one's interests above their own. It is primarily social rather than instrumental in character, premised on the idea that the parties involved have shared social bonds which make it possible for the one to imagine, apprehend and influence the interests of the other. Motive-based trust is therefore founded on shared group membership. Implicated in its formation and negotiation is communication of group membership and status; perhaps, in the case of the police, membership of or exclusion from the nation-state as a community of affect and belonging. Such trust may be considered particularly important for the police because, due to the nature of their job, they may find it difficult to be predictable or keep promises. Officers may be unable to arrive at a household at a pre-arranged time to take a statement because another call intervened, for example. In such cases motive-based trust provides a buffer against disappointed expectations since it provides reassurance that the reasons for tardiness are valid.

The legitimacy of the police in the eyes of the policed is vital (Tyler 2006). In countries like the UK, where policing has traditionally been conducted by 'consent' (Hough 2003; Reiner 2000), the police rely on the good will, assistance and cooperation of the population in carrying out almost all their duties. Those who perceive the police as legitimate are more likely to concur with the decisions made by officers, to comply with instructions, and to cooperate with investigations (Tyler and Huo 2002; Tyler and Fagan 2008). In as much as the legitimacy of authorities is reproduced or enhanced by the perception that they are fair, unbiased and valid repositories of trust, cooperation with the police can be promoted by officers displaying fairness and respect in their dealings with individuals. Conversely police behaviour which is perceived as unfair or disrespectful will damage legitimacy and threaten the goodwill of the public. Tyler and his colleagues suggest that this link between legitimacy and deference develops because legitimate authorities are perceived to represent and embody shared group values. A legitimate police force represents a system of legal order and control the individual feels part of – they therefore accept its decisions because they feel it is right to do so, not, for example, because a penalty may result if they do not.

Procedural justice therefore stands in contrast to both an instrumental understanding which holds that legitimacy resides primarily in the ability of the police to perform its role as an agent of the criminal justice system; and also to the view that legitimacy is derived

from considerations about distributive justice, the fair allocation of police attention and resources. The three different conceptualisations are not, of course, mutually incompatible. Effectiveness in 'fighting crime' and distributive fairness are important aspects of legitimacy, being, respectively, the major function of the police service and the way in which it is expected to operate, not only in a governmental or administrative sense but at the level of individual understanding (Roberts and Hough 2005). However work within the procedural justice paradigm consistently finds that it is the perceived fairness of procedures which have a dominant role in predicting satisfaction with both personal and more mediated experiences of the police (MacCoun 2005).

Until now most work on procedural justice has taken place in the US. A recent collected volume (Tyler 2007) sought to initiate a project of exploring and testing the model in other contexts. While many contributors do indeed find potential procedural justice effects in countries and social situations far removed from the US, others are more cautious (see also Tankebe 2008; 2009). In particular Smith (2007a), while acknowledging the importance of procedural justice in societies with well-established and settled legal systems, underlines both the socially and temporally limited scope of most extant research. Noting that the legitimacy of the police is high among those who have had little or no contact with them, Smith goes on to suggest that, far from being 'created' by the experience procedural justice, for many people in countries such as the USA and UK the legitimacy of (and trust in) the police is in place before any they have any personal experience of policing. This baseline or initial legitimacy is constituted for many people by a 'leap of faith' (Möllering 2006):

> "...instead of gradually building general views from particular experiences, people leap to the bold hypothesis that the police are worthy of trust and ought to be obeyed. They then retreat from this hypothesis only if it is falsified by their experience." (Smith 2007a: 56)

Disentangling contact experience and legitimacy

For many people, then, trust and confidence in, or the legitimacy of, the police is something which is established prior to any direct experience. During encounters this may literally be put to the test and be reinforced or, as Smith says, falsified (see also Smith 2007b). But the relationship between experience, legitimacy and cooperation is likely to be circular, not linear. The legitimacy of an authority or institution will have an impact on the way interactions with it are experienced (Reisig and Chandek 2001; Rosenbaum *et al.* 2005; Tyler and Fagan 2008; Weitzer and Tuch 2004). People who perceive authorities to be

legitimate, who have motive-based trust in them, are more likely to experience their actions in a positive light. In contrast the actions of authorities perceived to be illegitimate, acting in situations where motive-based trust is low, are likely to be perceived in a negative light. Furthermore, the general legitimacy of the police may be more important in the formation of judgements than any specific experiences.

There are a number of different ways of conceptualising the relationship between the legitimacy that is reproduced by experiences of procedural justice during contacts with authorities and that which exists prior to the experience and which affects how events are interpreted. Ultimately of course they are one and the same thing. Legitimacy is a dynamic process, constantly being reproduced by and through lived experience. However in analytic terms it is useful to distinguish between what Easton (1975) termed specific and diffuse support. His notion of specific support corresponds well with common measures of support for the police – survey questions which ask 'how good a job' the police are doing or how well respondents think their local area is being policed (FitzGerald *et al.* 2002; Roberts and Hough 2005; Brand *et al.* 2006) – since it is directed at the perceived behaviour of authoritative institutions, either in the form of identifiable actions or a general idea of performance (Easton 1975: 439). These general questions are often used as a proxy for the legitimacy of the police, although recent work has demonstrated that trust and confidence in the police is much more multi-faceted than a simple consideration of how good a job they are doing (Jackson and Sunshine 2007; Bradford, Jackson and Stanko 2009).

In contrast, diffuse support "refers to evaluations of what an object is or represents – to the general meaning it has for a person – not of what it does ... Outputs and beneficial performance may rise and fall while this support, in the form of generalized attachment, continues" (Easton 1975: 444). Diffuse support for an authority is durable, by and large independent of short term events and changes in performance, represents an attachment to the authority for its own sake rather than, for example, in terms of cost/benefit analyses, and is in many respects prior to considerations about performance because it attaches to institutions themselves, whereas specific support attaches to the present incumbents of those institutions. Diffuse support in these terms brings to mind the habitus as described by Pierre Bourdieu "systems of durable, transposable dispositions ... structuring structures ... principles which generate and organize practices and representations" (Bourdieu 1990: 53).This idea would predict that society is structured in such a way that diffuse support for the police is maintained and reproduced. Conceptualisations of an underlying, structuring, police legitimacy are indeed common in the criminological literature, for example in the way that the *image* of the police as crime-fighter, thief-taker and ultimate defender of law

and order is held to establish and re-establish a legitimacy which offers relative immunity from short-term difficulties and creates a situation which renders the police 'inevitable' (Mawby 2002), or in the notion of doxic/paleo-symbolic dispositions toward the police which structure the ways in which policing is experienced and made sense of (Loader and Mulcahy 2003). This division into diffuse and specific support, or perhaps high (structuring) and low (performative) legitimacy (Mawby 2002), provides a tool for examining how personal contact, assessed through the prism of procedural justice, impacts on the legitimacy of the police and, simultaneously, how judgements about what happens during contacts are affected by that 'same' legitimacy.

The wider context of policing

Inspired in part by the apparent decline in trust and confidence in the police over the last two decades (Hough 2007; Reiner 2000; Roberts and Hough 2005) reassurance and community based policing policies (Crawford 2007; Fielding 2005; Innes 2007) have centred upon the idea that trust and confidence can be restored by increasing police visibility and accessibility, creating a more 'customer-focused' police force (Office of Public Service Reform 2003), and addressing those 'signal' crimes which the public find particularly disturbing (Innes 2004a; 2004b). The place of such policies has been cemented by adoption of the new public confidence performance target (HM Treasury 2007) which, for all its imperfections, places public trust and confidence at the heart of policing priorities. More broadly, such policies hold that police officers by their actions communicate to people not only reassurance, but also the efficacy of the police in dealing with crime and disorder. There is therefore an active recognition that anxieties about security are key drivers of what is desired from policing (Innes 2004a; 2004b), although perceptions of change in non-criminal or anti-social behaviour as much as criminality is central in determining confidence in the police (Jackson et al. 2009). Policing is central in producing and reproducing feelings of security – but also, it has been claimed, of insecurity, as ever more pervasive approaches to policing reinforce feelings of danger (Loader 2006; Loader and Walker 2007). These debates underline that individual contacts between police and public cannot be viewed in isolation, but must be located within the wider context of concerns about crime, disorder and the practise of policing.

Research questions

This paper therefore explores the extent and nature of procedural justice concerns in a non-US context. The study examines the relationships between more general feelings about the

police and what happens during face to face contacts with them. The existence of a potential procedural justice effect in Londoner's assessments of the police has already been established (Bradford, Jackson and Stanko 2009). My purpose here is to build on this work by investigating what the implications of contact experiences are for individual's opinions and to test some of the central predictions of the procedural justice framework. This analysis is combined with consideration of how diffuse support interacts with personal experiences. By investigating the extent to which elements of the procedural justice model can be applied in a UK context I will examine its potential for inducing some of the changes in police-public relations reassurance and neighbourhood policing herald. The specific research questions are:

i. Does the perception of procedural fairness enhance satisfaction with police-public encounters?
ii. How are contact experiences translated into specific support for the police? Is procedural justice really valorised over instrumental concerns?
iii. What causes people to changes their minds about the police as a result of face to face encounters?
iv. Does fair treatment increase acceptance of police actions and decisions?
v. Since legitimacy is held to increase willingness to defer to the decisions of authorities, to what extent does diffuse support affect the interpretation of encounters net of what actually occurs during them?

Data and measures

Data from the Metropolitan Police Service's 2006/07 Crime Victimisation Survey (CVS)[5] (n=17,662) are used to address these questions. This is a large scale telephone survey which questions those who have recently had contact with the police as a result of being victims of a crime. Respondents are asked about their experiences of initiating contact, what happened during it, and any follow up they received. Interviews are conducted 6 to 12 weeks after the incident occurred. The survey uses crime reports to obtain the contact details of victims, employing a quota method to obtain a sample which is representative of the types and proportions of crime within each of the 32 boroughs in the London plus

[5] Since re-branded as the User Satisfaction Survey (USS).

Heathrow Airport.[6] So, if 25 per cent of reported crimes within a borough are property crimes, 25 per cent of the CVS sample for that borough will be victims of such crimes.

There are a number of key measures. Opinions of the police are measured in two ways, broadly corresponding to specific and diffuse support. For specific support a factor score derived from questions asking respondents to rate the jobs their local police and the 'London-wide' police were doing (on five point scales), and how satisfied they are with the way their area is policed (on a seven point scale), is used. These questions clearly relate to views about how well the police is doing its job. The scores were obtained using a ordinal latent trait model with full information maximum likelihood estimation (with the statistical package Latent Gold 4.0). A discrete one-factor model was estimated and factor scores calculated to form a single index. There are two advantage to this technique compared with traditional factor analysis. Ordinal latent trait analysis treats the indicators as what they in fact are, ordinal categorical variables rather than continuous; and full information maximum likelihood estimation uses all available information in the dataset, meaning cases with some missing values are not dropped from the analysis.

A single measure is used to examine diffuse support, a question which asks respondents to identify their 'overall opinion' of the police *prior* to the experience of contact (generally positive, generally negative, mixed or none). While the use of a single measure is problematic others have used a similar approach. In an influential paper Brandl et al (1994), drawing explicitly on Easton's ideas of diffuse and specific support, used a single measure of 'global attitudes' ("In general, how satisfied are you with the police") and compared this with four distinct specific attitudes, which covered satisfaction with a number of different types of contact. In a paper which also drew on Easton, Baird (2001) used a single measure to assess diffuse support of the Federal Court in Germany.

The main body of the survey considers opinions of events during the contact process, comprising five sections covering ease of contact and waiting time (for those who initiated contact themselves), the actions taken by the police, the provision of follow up information, and perceptions of treatment. A final question asked respondents to summarise their overall opinion of how the case was handled. Importantly, this structure allows the contact to be considered as a process, rather than a disembodied point in time. In many cases the first visit from the police will have come some hours after an initial call was made; in others more than one visit would have been made, while follow up contact might occur some time later. Within each section a key question (on a seven point scale) addresses overall

[6] Initial sampling is random, but once a sufficient number of a particular crime type is obtained those subsequently contacted who experienced the same type of crime are not interviewed.

satisfaction with that aspect of the process, and these are mirrored by a final question which covers satisfaction with the experience overall. Answers addressing each of the five sections are employed separately to enable comparison of the effects of each, and in each case are grouped into three categories, 'satisfied', 'neither', and 'dissatisfied'. This design was necessary not least to take account of the complexity of some the responses reported in the CVS (see results below).

Because the response variable throughout is opinions of the police it was important to take into account other factors that may be formative of these. Unfortunately the CVS is rather limited in this regard. However, three questions (on five point scales) asking respondents about change in their local area are used to represent correspondent's views about crime and disorder: two gauge opinions on whether the local crime rate and level of ASB has improved, deteriorated or stayed the same over the last two years; the other asks whether respondents feel more or less safe, or about the same, than they did a year ago. Ordinal latent trait analysis suggested answers to these questions represented one underlying construct, which might be interpreted as some measure of insecurity. A discrete one-factor model was estimated and scores extracted in Latent Gold. Sex, age and ethnic group are used as control variables throughout, as is the type of crime experienced and the number of times the respondent had been victimised in the past year (dichotomised as once or more than once).

The CVS is a cross-sectional survey, asking respondents questions at only one point in time. This presents an obvious problem for a research design which seeks not only to interpret the impact of 'prior opinions' on assessments of contact experiences, with all the potential for cross-contamination which this entails, but which also seeks specifically to differentiate between respondent's views of the police prior to the contact and their views at the interview date. This is ultimately an insurmountable problem for all cross-sectional surveys (and indeed, the same is true for panel studies which do not utilise an experimental design), meaning that casual claims developed from such data must always be treated as contingent and with considerable caution. However the nature and design of the CVS may go a little way to alleviating some of these pressures. There is an implicit temporal order to the survey which, coupled with the fact that the substantive subject is one and only one recent experience, presents the possibility that respondents embark on a narrative process when responding to the survey questions. That is, the structure of the survey encourages the idea that events during the contact might impact on opinions of the police, and that respondents will consider their current opinions of the police in the light of their contact experience (there is even a question, immediately following that which asks about prior

opinions, which asks respondents whether they have changed their minds about the police as a result of their experiences "on this occasion" – see below). Furthermore, the question on prior opinions is worded in such a way that seems likely to access a generalised orientation toward the police rather than specific assessments which might be subject to direct amendment as a result of the contact process. None of the above negates the problem of the cross-sectional nature of this data. However, if robust associations (Goldthorpe 2001) are found which support the narrative structure suggested then, at the very least, a provisional interpretation which suggests a causal relationship between contact experiences and subsequent opinions might be attempted. This can be tested in future work, for example via panel studies which include experimental interventions.

Results

Assessments of specific aspects of the contact process

Table 1 shows that levels of satisfaction with the experience were generally high, and this was true for 'overall' satisfaction and each of the five major sections of the survey. The first task is to examine how CVS respondents formed judgements about what happened during their contact with the police, and in doing so assess the extent to which the CVS data can be slotted into a procedural justice framework. In the course of doing so this section will assess the extent that the three major components of the survey – satisfaction with police actions, follow up, and personal treatment of respondents – reflect or can be taken to represent either the potential antecedents of police legitimacy as suggested by the procedural justice model, or more instrumental concerns. The remaining two, ease of contact and waiting time, appear more one-dimensional indicators, although this does not mean they are easy to interpret: does dissatisfaction with ease of contact represent a feeling that the police were not available to provide a service, judged in instrumental terms, a feeling that the police should be easily available to those they serve and represent, or some combination of the two?

Table 1

Satisfaction with different aspects of the contact

Percentages

	Ease of contact	Waiting time	Actions	Follow-up	Treatment	Overall
Satisfied	*86*	*83*	*73*	*58*	*92*	*78*
Neither	*7*	*5*	*13*	*20*	*3*	*11*
Dissatisfied	*8*	*11*	*13*	*22*	*5*	*11*
Unweighted base	12,225	6,381	17,294	16,825	17,473	17,534

Source: CVS

Regression analyses (results not reported here[7]) suggested that a number of key themes emerged from the questions which lead up to satisfaction with the three core measures used here: personal treatment, police actions, and follow up. Of the three 'quality of treatment' appears most clearly related to the concepts commonly used in the procedural justice literature (for example see Tyler and Fagan 2008). With regard to satisfaction with police actions, failing to offer reassurance and not appearing competent had by some margin the greatest influence on respondents views. Reassurance could be considered as a concrete, desirable, outcome, which would give satisfaction with police actions a more instrumental slant; or it could be treated as a product of interpersonal relations between police and public, accentuating the idea that satisfaction with actions reflects ideas about the quality of decision making, the way officers went about their jobs, and communication between them and the crime victims involved. It does not seem unreasonable to stress the latter interpretation; in general, satisfaction with actions was driven more by concerns about the quality of personal interaction with officers and the display of competence than by concrete provision of services.

At the time of interview only 34 per cent of respondents had received any subsequent contact after reporting the incident and the initial police response. When it came to assessing satisfaction with the provision of progress information respondents were influenced strongly by the content of that information, suggesting that they were taking a relatively instrumental stance in this section of the survey. Positive, or at least definite, outcomes were valued. Furthermore, over half of those who received *no* follow up contact were satisfied with how well they had been kept informed. Perhaps this was because they did not expect any follow up, for example because all they needed from the police was a crime reference number. In other words, they had already received the outcome they required. The suggestion is that the most important factors affecting satisfaction with the provision of progress information (follow up) were instrumental concerns regarding what respondents wanted and received from the encounter.

In sum, the three major components of contact assessed here correspond moderately well with three differing aspects of police behaviour which have been compared and contrasted in the development of the procedural justice literature. Assessments of police actions relate to concerns about the quality of police decision-making (competence), which are held to be important if decision making processes are to be perceived as fair and equitable (Tyler and Huo 2002). Ratings of the quality of follow up contact appear to be influenced primarily (although not entirely) by instrumental concerns, which the procedural

[7] Available from the author.

justice model suggests will be less important in the formation of overall opinions about contacts and in any implications for general opinions of the police (Tyler and Fagan 2008). Finally, the way in which perceptions about the quality of personal treatment are assessed match closely with measures such as 'justice of police interpersonal treatment' (Tyler and Fagan 2008) or 'quality of treatment' (Sunshine and Tyler 2003). Of course there are also some important differences between the CVS data and US work, in particular the stress in the CVS data on 'reassurance', but these do not appear to be of sufficient magnitude to invalidate the comparison. Indeed, that satisfaction with police actions is driven in part by the reassurance provided may be a key element in understanding how contact experiences impact on general opinions of the police, and consideration of reassurance is a strength of this dataset.

Overall satisfaction with the contact

Table 1 above showed that overall satisfaction with the way the police handled the contact was high among CVS correspondents. But what was important in influencing overall satisfaction? Appendix Table 1 shows results from a multinomial logistic regression model predicting overall satisfaction, and it appears police actions had the greatest unique statistical effect. Controlling for other factors respondents satisfied with police actions were very much more likely to be happy overall than those who gave a neutral 'neither' response, while those who were dissatisfied were very much more likely to be unhappy. Notably, those happy with police actions were also more likely to be dissatisfied overall, indicating that the relationship between police actions and overall ratings of the contact was more complex than a simple mechanical correspondence.[8] Personal treatment had possibly the next most important impact on overall satisfaction, followed by ease of contact and follow up. Recall that the most important factor influencing satisfaction with police actions was feeling reassured (or not). It appears, then, that in line with the procedural justice model, personal treatment and the quality of interaction during the contact were most important in influencing overall satisfaction.

Prior opinions or diffuse support were also independently associated with overall satisfaction. Those who said they felt generally positive about the police were more likely to be satisfied overall, while those who said they felt generally negative were less likely to give a positive rating and more likely to give a negative one. In other words,

[8] One explanation for this could be that those satisfied with police actions were more likely to give a definite response when asked to rate the whole experience, while those who replied 'neither' to police actions were more inclined to give a similar response with regard to the overall rating.

net of what actually happened (and remembering that judgements about actions, treatment and so on were themselves influenced by prior opinions) those with a generally positive stance toward the police were more likely to be happy overall with the way the contact was handled, while the reverse was true for those with generally negative opinions. This finding resonates with a considerable body of evidence from the United States suggesting that people's prior opinions affect the way encounters with the police are judged (Brandl et al 1994; Skogan 2006; Weitzer and Tuch 2004; Tyler and Fagan 2008), which generally develops the idea that positive prior orientations will result in positive appraisals and in particular that negative orientations will result in negative appraisals.

The influence of contact experiences on support for the police

What then is the impact of experiences during this type of contact on opinions of how good a job the police are doing? Table 2 shows the mean 'overall' rating of the police (or level of specific support) by satisfaction with each aspect of the contact, overall satisfaction and also stated prior opinions. It clearly shows that compared with a neutral opinion (as indicated by a 'neither' answer), satisfactory contact had a positive association with overall opinions, while unsatisfactory contact had a negative impact. This was true for all aspects of the contact and for overall satisfaction. Unsurprisingly, the level of diffuse support was strongly associated with the level of specific support.[9]

The data shown in Table 2 suggests that for crime victims all aspects of their subsequent contact with the police can affect their opinions. Quality of treatment has arguably the biggest impact. But bivariate correlations can only tell part of the story. To investigate in more depth, Table 3 shows results from a linear regression model predicting ratings of the job done by the local police. Controlling for other factors, satisfactory experiences were still associated with more favourable opinions and unsatisfactory experiences associated with less favourable. Ease of contact was the only exception, and here dissatisfaction had a significant association with opinions but satisfaction did not. It is notable that the unique negative effect of being unhappy with follow up was smaller than those associated with dissatisfaction with actions and treatment. In as much as follow up relates to 'outcome' this might reflect a relatively realistic expectation of the ability of the police to catch criminals and solve the crime (FitzGerald et al. 2002; Skogan 2006). If they

[9] Although further analysis suggested that diffuse support did not *determine* specific support. For example a significant proportion (18 per cent) of those with generally high opinions were not happy with the way their area was policed; 21 per cent of those with generally low opinions thought their local police were doing an excellent or good job.

do, an uplift in attitudes may result; however failure to do so may result in less damage than perceptions of poor treatment or lack of reassurance.

Table 2
Mean overall rating of police: by satisfaction with contact
(Higher scores = less favourable opinions)

	Mean	95% C.I of mean		Unweighted n
Satisfaction with police actions				
Satisfied	0.25	0.25	0.25	12,708
Neither	0.39	0.38	0.40	2,322
Dissatisfied	0.52	0.50	0.53	2,264
Satisfaction with follow up				
Satisfied	0.23	0.23	0.26	9,684
Neither	0.35	0.34	0.36	3,395
Dissatisfied	0.45	0.44	0.46	3,746
Satisfaction with treatment				
Satisfied	0.28	0.28	0.29	16,066
Neither	0.47	0.44	0.49	604
Dissatisfied	0.58	0.56	0.61	803
Overall satisfaction with contact				
Satisfied	0.25	0.25	0.26	13,680
Neither	0.43	0.42	0.44	1,937
Dissatisfied	0.55	0.54	0.57	1,917
Stated prior opinion				
Generally high	0.23	0.23	0.24	9144
Mixed	0.36	0.36	0.37	5130
Generally low	0.54	0.52	0.56	1283
None	0.34	0.32	0.35	2105

	Mean	Min	Max	Unweighted n
All people	0.30	0.00	1.00	17,662

Source: CVS

It appears then that among victims the strongest associations between contact experience and confidence in (or specific support for) the local police flow through assessments of the personal treatment received and/or the actions taken – in the latter case, that is, largely through feelings of reassurance. In other words these data support the idea that it is personal treatment which is most important to people in their dealings with the police. In contrast instrumental concerns, as represented by follow up, have less of an impact if things go 'badly', although the uplift from good experiences is similar across all three components.

Table 3
Linear regression predicting 'overall' rating of police
(high scores = worse rating)

	Coef.		[95% Conf. Interval]	
Satisfaction with police actions (ref: neither)				
Satisfied	-0.056	***	-0.068	-0.044
Dissatisfied	0.047	***	0.031	0.062
Satisfaction with follow up (ref: neither)				
Satisfied	-0.064	***	-0.074	-0.054
Dissatisfied	0.019	***	0.007	0.032
Satisfaction with treatment (ref: neither)				
Satisfied	-0.037	***	-0.058	-0.016
Dissatisfied	0.054	***	0.028	0.081
Satisfaction with ease of contact (ref: neither/NA)				
Satisfied	-0.003		-0.011	0.006
Dissatisfied	0.044	***	0.026	0.062
Satisfaction with waiting time (ref: neither/NA)				
Satisfied	-0.025	***	-0.034	-0.016
Dissatisfied	0.040	***	0.021	0.059
Type of crime experienced (ref: burglary)				
Violent	0.000		-0.012	0.011
Vehicle crime	0.004		-0.007	0.015
Traffic crime	-0.007		-0.022	0.008
Racially motivated	-0.001		-0.026	0.024
Sex (ref: male)				
Female	-0.007	*	-0.014	0.000
Age (ref: 16-24)				
25-34	0.019	***	0.007	0.032
35-44	0.027	***	0.014	0.039
45-54	0.019	***	0.006	0.033
55-64	0.019	***	0.005	0.034
65-74	0.024	***	0.006	0.041
75 plus	-0.003		-0.032	0.025
Ethnic group (ref: White British/Irish)				
Mixed	-0.015		-0.042	0.012
Indian	-0.021	**	-0.038	-0.003
Pakistani/Bangladeshi	-0.038	***	-0.060	-0.017
Black Caribbean	-0.009		-0.026	0.008
Black African	-0.038	***	-0.056	-0.019
Other	-0.020	***	-0.032	-0.008
Number of time victimised in last 12 months (ref: this occasion only)				
More than once	0.015	***	0.004	0.025
Level of personal security (high scores=less secure)	0.287	***	0.273	0.302
Stated opinion of police prior to encounter (ref: mixed)				
Generally high	-0.097	***	-0.106	-0.089
Generally low	0.100	***	0.085	0.116
None	-0.019	***	-0.031	-0.006
R2	*0.29*			
Adj. R2	*0.28*			

Unweighted n = 16,475
*** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1.
Source: CVS

Other findings from Table 3 suggest that being older than the 16-24 reference category was associated with less favourable views, while membership of most ethnic minority groups was associated with more favourable. Feeling less secure and having a generally low

opinion of the police were, not surprisingly, associated with substantially less favourable views of the job they were doing.

One further point is of relevance. There were no significant interactions between having good, mixed or bad prior opinions and what happened during the contact itself. The associations between satisfaction/ dissatisfaction with different aspects of the process and 'specific support' were similar for those with any level of diffuse support. One implication of this is that, in line with the procedural justice thesis, opinions of the police among those with negative orientations can be improved via contact if it is handled well. Someone with an initially negative orientation who was satisfied with actions, treatment and follow up would likely have a considerably more favourable view of the job the police were doing than a similar person who felt the contact was just 'neither satisfactory nor unsatisfactory'. For those with already favourable views well handled contacts can make opinions even better. A second implication is that compared with those with mixed prior opinions, individuals with a generally positive orientation toward the police would have to experience an encounter which went quite badly wrong before a large negative impact was felt – it appears again that high levels of diffuse support provide insulation against bad experiences.

Changing people's minds?

As well as allowing consideration of implied changes to specific opinions of the police as a result of personal contact, the CVS also allows direct consideration of respondent's own estimations of whether the experience changed their views. Immediately following the question about prior, general, opinions of the police was one which asked "As a result of your contact with the police on this occasion, please tell me if your opinion of the police is now better, worse or has not changed". Appendix Table 2 shows the results of a multinomial logistic regression model predicting responses to the 'change in opinion' question. Controlling for other factors, satisfaction with treatment was the element most strongly associated with a change in opinions for the better, while dissatisfaction with actions was strongly associated with changes in opinions for the worse. When it comes to changing opinions, assessments of personal treatment and police actions appear (albeit in different ways) to be more important than other aspects of the encounter. A second result from the model is that holding other things constant, compared with those with a mixed orientation toward the police those with a generally positive view were no more likely to change their opinions for the better, but considerably more likely to change them for the worse, while those with previous negative opinions were more likely to change their

opinions for the better. This could reflect the common idea that for those with a generally high opinion of the police personal contact may well damage opinions about them no matter what the police do (Skogan 2006; Smith 2007b). In contrast, and perhaps contrary to expectations, those with a general negative opinion of the police were more likely than those with mixed orientations to come away with more positive opinions.

Acceptance of police actions and decision-making

So far strong, if not unqualified, support for the procedural justice model has been found. The ways in which people are treated do appear to be more important than material outcomes. But the model goes further than just this basic idea. One key prediction is that people who perceive the police to be legitimate are more likely to accept their decisions or actions and accept the outcomes of personal contact, whatever these may be. Decision acceptance is therefore fostered both by the experience of procedural fairness and the motive-based trust which are antecedents of legitimacy and through legitimacy itself, since one of the defining features of a legitimate authority is held to be a feeling that instructions or decisions flowing from it are experienced as worthy of compliance or acceptance as of right (Tyler 1990; Tyler and Huo 2002; Tyler and Fagan 2008). In as much as they are representative of legitimacy prior to the encounter high levels of diffuse support should also predict greater acceptance of police decision making.

Three binary logistic regression models were used to test the idea that the experience of fair treatment and high levels of diffuse support promoted acceptance of police actions and decisions. These examined respondent's opinions about whether the police should have made a separate visit to collect evidence, should have found the property stolen in a burglary, and should have made an arrest as a result of the crime. The response variable was coded such that 1 equalled feeling that the police should have undertaken the relevant action or achieved the relevant outcome. Results are shown in Table 4. Satisfaction with actions and follow up are excluded from these models because they may have been determined in part by whether the police actually did the thing in question.

Table 4

Logistic regression models predicting disagreement with police decisions/actions

(1 = respondent thought action should have been undertaken/achieved; 0 = they did not)

	Should have made separate visit to collect evidence			Should have found property			Should have made arrest		
	Odds Ratio	[95% Conf. Interval]		Odds Ratio	[95% Conf. Interval]		Odds Ratio	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Satisfaction with treatment (ref: neither)									
Satisfied	0.381 ***	0.247	0.588	0.540 **	0.323	0.902	0.521 ***	0.350	0.774
Dissatisfied	1.684 *	0.986	2.875	1.218	0.633	2.341	2.044 ***	1.238	3.376
Satisfaction with ease of contact (ref: neither/NA)									
Satisfied	0.744 **	0.603	0.918	1.213	0.949	1.550	0.795 **	0.670	0.945
Dissatisfied	1.576 **	1.054	2.355	2.125 ***	1.376	3.284	1.859 ***	1.334	2.592
Satisfaction with waiting time (ref: neither/NA)									
Satisfied	0.746 **	0.595	0.934	0.805 *	0.633	1.025	0.860	0.716	1.032
Dissatisfied	1.582 **	1.089	2.298	2.135 ***	1.436	3.174	1.719 ***	1.215	2.432
Type of crime experienced (ref: burglary)									
Violent	1.162	0.869	1.555				2.041 ***	1.618	2.574
Vehicle crime	0.920	0.667	1.270				1.008	0.787	1.290
Traffic crime	0.927	0.658	1.304				1.134	0.849	1.513
Racially motivated	0.906	0.572	1.435				1.767 **	1.129	2.765
Sex (ref: male)									
Female	1.182 *	0.977	1.428	0.836 *	0.676	1.035	0.921	0.789	1.074
Age (ref: 16-24)									
25-34	0.865	0.649	1.153	1.157	0.827	1.617	1.049	0.822	1.338
35-44	0.787	0.585	1.059	1.252	0.904	1.734	1.220	0.955	1.557
45-54	1.059	0.775	1.446	1.118	0.775	1.614	1.123	0.858	1.469
55-64	0.891	0.618	1.285	0.764	0.488	1.195	0.983	0.727	1.330
65-74	0.551 **	0.315	0.964	0.666	0.367	1.205	0.648 *	0.417	1.007
70 plus	0.334	0.074	1.495	0.796	0.273	2.318	0.950	0.438	2.061
Ethnic group (ref: White British/Irish)									
Mixed	2.423 ***	1.378	4.260	1.558	0.748	3.246	1.681 **	1.054	2.682
Indian	2.840 ***	1.892	4.263	2.972 ***	1.995	4.428	2.483 ***	1.800	3.425
Pakistani/Bangladeshi	2.560 ***	1.627	4.027	6.358 ***	4.042	10.003	2.225 ***	1.505	3.289
Black Caribbean	2.056 ***	1.384	3.053	2.862 ***	1.847	4.434	1.878 ***	1.318	2.675
African	1.835 ***	1.203	2.801	3.396 ***	2.236	5.159	2.462 ***	1.738	3.489
Other	1.494 ***	1.130	1.975	2.239 ***	1.642	3.052	1.477 ***	1.170	1.865
Number of time victimised in last 12 months (ref: this occasion only)									
More than once	1.311 **	1.021	1.683	1.314 **	1.008	1.714	1.267 **	1.035	1.551
Level of personal security (high scores=less secure)	1.990 ***	1.384	2.860	1.509 **	1.007	2.260	1.966 ***	1.457	2.654
Stated opinion of police prior to encounter (ref: mixed)									
Generally high	0.795 **	0.643	0.984	0.783 **	0.618	0.992	0.939	0.788	1.118
Generally low	1.136	0.804	1.605	1.332	0.896	1.980	1.322 *	0.975	1.792
None	0.688 **	0.489	0.969	1.009	0.704	1.447	1.058	0.809	1.383
Proportion of respondents thinking each outcome should have been achieved	0.15			0.26			0.22		
Unweighted n	2857			2981			3828		

*** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1.

Note - only respondents for whom action/decision was appropriate are included in each case.

Source: CVS

In all three models shown in Table 4, satisfaction with treatment was independently associated a greater acceptance of the relevant decision or action, and in two of the three dissatisfaction was associated with less acceptance. Put another way, net of other factors those who felt poorly treated by officers had substantially greater odds of thinking the police should have achieved the action or outcome in question. Satisfaction levels for ease of contact and waiting time were also associated with decision acceptance. In all three cases those dissatisfied with ease of contact and waiting time were consistently more likely to think that the relevant action should have been taken or achieved, while satisfaction with these aspects of the encounter had less consistent, but still noticeable, associations with greater decision acceptance. It may be that inefficient actions from the police (being hard to contact, turning up late) in some aspects of the encounter may have knock-on effects throughout the contact process, for example resulting in a lower degree of tolerance toward other things that might have been achieved but were not. Equally, however, it could be that ease of contact and especially waiting time are experienced more in procedural terms. A long wait for officers to arrive might communicate to individuals that they are not important to them and that the police do not, in fact, have their best interests at heart. In other words, judgements about these aspects of the contact may also fall under the procedural justice rubric and have a commensurate impact on acceptance of police actions.

The quality of personal interaction during the contact process did therefore seem to have an impact on acceptance of police decisions and actions; prior opinions had less consistent independent association with acceptance. It is particularly notable that, compared with those who reported a previously mixed opinion of the police, a low level of diffuse support had little statistical effect on decision acceptance (with the exception, significant at the 10 per cent level only, of slightly lower propensities to accept the lack of an arrest); it might have been expected that those with a low level of diffuse support would be more critical of police actions. In contrast, it does appear that high levels of diffuse support are consistently associated with slightly greater odds of decision acceptance. Other findings of note are, firstly, that those who felt less secure appeared less accepting of decisions and failure to complete actions, and secondly that although in most cases the type of crime experienced had little influence of opinions, victims of violent and racist attacks were (when compared with victims of burglaries) more likely to think that an arrest should have been made

Discussion and conclusions

The findings from this study need to be treated with caution. The sample is in many ways doubly biased, firstly by including only those who thought it worthwhile and/or took the trouble to report crimes they experienced to the police and secondly by capturing only those among this group who agreed to be interviewed at a later date. Such people cannot be considered representative of London's population as a whole, or indeed the population which comes into *regular* contact with the police. Furthermore there is considerable evidence in the analysis that some respondents answers were somewhat perfunctory (for example a relatively high number of corresponding 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' responses). So any evidence for procedural justice concerns (or their absence) should not be taken to apply automatically in other situations. Despite this, the evidence is strongly supportive of a procedural justice effect. Fair and decent treatment, and proper actions, are consistently prioritised above outcomes. Perceptions that personal treatment by officers do appear to be linked to improved opinions of the police, increased chances of people changing their minds about the police, and greater levels of decision acceptance.

Many of the findings discussed appear to show a strong symmetry of association, with satisfactory experiences associated with more positive opinions of the police and unsatisfactory contacts associated with more negative opinions. Other studies have found either almost complete asymmetry, where only poor experiences have an impact (Skogan 2006), or a considerably weaker symmetry, where good encounters do have an impact, but one which is much smaller than that arising from unsatisfactory encounters (Bradford, Jackson and Stanko 2009). An optimistic reading of this might be that the specific nature of the police/public interactions examined here, in contrast to analyses based on all public-initiated contacts used elsewhere, means that contacts between police and victims of crime are prone to a higher level of symmetry than other types of encounter. However, recall that interviews for the CVS are carried out within 12 weeks of the crime being reported to the police, which means respondents are considering a recent encounter (other surveys, such as the METPAS and BCS, ask respondents to consider contacts that have occurred over the past year). It may be that after such a short interval both positive or negative impressions are 'fresh' in people's minds and have an effect; however, as time goes by positive memories fade while the negative ones remain. This may in part be due to experiences with other elements of the criminal justice system – Newburn and Merry (1990) found in their qualitative study that although initial rates of satisfaction with police among crime victims was high this declined over time as people moved through the system, primarily due to a

drying up in the flow of information. Finally, any symmetry in the CVS can only be inferred by comparison to the central 'neither' category, since there is no 'no contact' group to act as an external referent.

As expected, general orientations, or diffuse support, seemed to influence how contacts were experienced, and how this fed into specific views. If the encounter went badly a positive general orientation provided protection against knock-on negative effects. In contrast those with generally negative opinions were more likely to have a subsequently poorer opinion of police performance. On the basis of this cross-sectional data there is strong evidence that general orientations do affect the impact of contact on confidence, less by influencing specific judgements than by providing a different 'starting point' from which assessments are made. So, for example, what happened during the contact itself had a similar association with overall satisfaction among those with positive and negative orientations toward the police, but the latter were more likely to emerge as dissatisfied overall, perhaps because they entered the encounter with a more negative outlook.[10] That said in no circumstance was diffuse support determinative of judgements about contacts or police performance: police actions in specific circumstances can always have an effect.

The procedural justice model has thus far be applied primarily in the United States (Tyler 2007). The data presented here present strong evidence that, in some UK contexts at least, a similar effect can be found, and may provide police with similar opportunities and challenges in their dealings with the public. In addition, the importance of reassurance to these UK respondents provides a new slant to the model, the relevance of which should not be underestimated. It seems that, while in line with the ideas of procedural justice victims of crime in London place considerable emphasis on the actions the police take in dealing with them, a feeling of reassurance seems to be equally important; work from the US emphasises perceptions of correct and fair procedures and rarely mentions reassurance. In many ways this enhances the model, since the provision of reassurance is intimately bound up not only with the quality of personal interactions but also with individual's orientations toward the police and the shared group values they represent.

Theoretical and empirical work in the UK has suggested that those people who feel part of the wider community and that the police share their values are more likely to see the police as doing a good job – and that reassurance may be at the heart of feeling this way (Innes 2004a, 2004b; Jackson and Bradford in press; Jackson and Sunshine 2007; Loader 2006). The relationship between feelings of security (or insecurity) and policing has also

[10] There is of course a high probability that answers to the 'prior opinions'(diffuse support) question were biased, since many people would not have had an accurate recall of their opinions before the contact experience, and their responses will have been influenced by their assessments of it.

been emphasised. Although not a central aspect of the analysis the measure of (in)security used here produces some suggestive results. Feeling more insecure – that crime and ASB were getting worse, and that levels of personal safety had declined – was consistently associated with less favourable assessments of both specific police actions and overall ratings.

Many current policing strategies are concerned with promoting security among the public and, through doing so, improve trust and confidence (Innes 2004a; Millie & Herrington 2004; Herrington & Millie 2006), and the CVS data are strongly supportive of a link between perceived security and assessments of the police. However the direction of causality assumed here is different to that suggested in other work. In using feelings of security as an explanatory variable the models described suggest that perceived security affects judgements about the behaviour of police, and that people who feel less secure are more critical. But reassurance and community policing programmes assume that policing practise can influence how secure people feel, in particular by addressing signal crimes (Innes 2004a; 2004b) and in general by increasing the volume, and improving the quality, of contacts between police and public. There is no way of unpicking this knot with a cross-sectional survey, but one is reminded of Loader's (2006) insistence that the causes of insecurity are wider than a policing response can effectively address (c.f. Reiner 2007). Attempting to remedy insecurity through policing may lead to a sense of urgency and impatience among the public as awareness of potential dangers is ramped up while policies meant to achieve security appear to fail, making people *more* critical of the police, not happier that a policing response is provided. The data presented here do suggest that, net of what actually occurs during encounters, people who feel less secure are less satisfied with their contacts with officers and with the police more generally. At the very least this might mean that if trust and confidence are to be improved via contact police need to try even harder to impress those who feel insecure and uncertain about crime and disorder in their local areas.

But there is a danger of being too negative here. In general the evidence from the CVS is highly supportive of the idea that trust and confidence in the police can be enhanced during personal contacts between officers and public through the use, and display, of fair, decent treatment and the provision of reassurance. Furthermore material or instrumental outcomes, while by no means inconsequential, appear to be less important. This, broadly, is good news for the police, since as Tyler and others have pointed out the quality of personal interactions is something within the control of individual officers to improve and 'deliver' – material outcomes often are not. Positive experiences during encounters appear to have the

potential to override both negative diffuse orientations and any feelings of insecurity people may have. The reverse holds true, however. Negative experiences, again more likely judged on procedural fairness criteria rather than through instrumental concerns, can seriously damage the standing of the police. Contact matters, and things can go wrong for the police as well as right. But to an extent at least it appears matters are under the control of officers themselves.

Appendix Table 1

Multinomial logistic regression model predicting overall satisfaction with contact

Reference category is neither

	Satisfied			Dissatisfied		
	Odds ratio	[95% Conf. Interval)		Odds ratio	[95% Conf. Interval)	
Satisfaction with police actions (ref: neither)						
Satisfied	9.077 ***	7.887	10.446	2.869 ***	2.234	3.684
Dissatisfied	1.106	0.912	1.342	12.297 ***	9.901	15.272
Satisfaction with follow up (ref: neither)						
Satisfied	3.576 ***	3.038	4.209	1.219	0.909	1.635
Dissatisfied	0.482 ***	0.417	0.558	2.580 ***	2.080	3.202
Satisfaction with treatment (ref: neither)						
Satisfied	5.003 ***	3.767	6.646	0.767 **	0.591	0.997
Dissatisfied	1.484	0.906	2.431	4.853 ***	3.374	6.983
Satisfaction with ease of contact (ref: neither/NA)						
Satisfied	1.548 ***	1.353	1.771	1.195 *	0.987	1.446
Dissatisfied	0.933	0.690	1.261	2.484 ***	1.871	3.299
Satisfaction with waiting time (ref: neither/NA)						
Satisfied	1.192 **	1.014	1.400	0.870	0.686	1.103
Dissatisfied	0.666 ***	0.497	0.893	1.286	0.941	1.758
Type of crime experienced (ref: burglary)						
Violent	0.876	0.721	1.064	1.253	0.956	1.642
Vehicle crime	0.914	0.756	1.105	0.889	0.678	1.167
Traffic crime	1.026	0.791	1.331	1.963 ***	1.407	2.739
Racially motivated	0.803	0.521	1.238	1.249	0.771	2.023
Sex (ref: male)						
Female	1.008	0.890	1.141	0.818 **	0.689	0.971
Age (ref: 16-24)						
25-34	0.965	0.792	1.176	0.896	0.685	1.172
35-44	0.928	0.761	1.131	1.243	0.954	1.620
45-54	1.026	0.828	1.272	1.203	0.897	1.612
55-64	1.451 ***	1.124	1.873	1.002	0.701	1.434
65-74	1.801 ***	1.255	2.584	1.070	0.628	1.822
75 plus	1.543	0.797	2.985	0.622	0.238	1.620
Ethnic group (ref: White British/Irish)						
Mixed	1.109	0.708	1.735	1.175	0.670	2.061
Indian	1.197	0.905	1.584	0.712	0.485	1.047
Pakistani/Bangladeshi	0.839	0.604	1.167	0.774	0.482	1.243
Black Caribbean	1.055	0.799	1.393	0.923	0.634	1.342
African	1.135	0.827	1.556	1.140	0.764	1.701
Other	0.891	0.729	1.089	0.925	0.714	1.198
Number of time victimised in last 12 months (ref: this occasion only)						
More than once	0.911	0.770	1.077	1.003	0.812	1.239
Level of personal security (high scores=less secure)	0.816	0.638	1.043	1.372 *	0.983	1.914
Stated opinion of police prior to encounter (ref: mixed)						
Generally high	1.833 ***	1.595	2.108	1.074	0.879	1.311
Generally low	0.736 ***	0.585	0.926	1.600 ***	1.230	2.079
None	1.006	0.828	1.221	1.143	0.881	1.483

n=16,411

*** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1.

Question:"Taking the whole experience into account, are you satisfied, dissatisfied or neither with the service provided by the police this case?", answers on a 7 point scale. Responses have been grouped into satisfied, dissatisfied and neither for ease of interpretation.

Source: CVS

Appendix Table 2

Multinomial logistic regression models predicting chance of changing opinions

Reference category was no change in opinion

	Better opinion			Worse opinion		
	Odds ratio	[95% Conf.	Interval]	Odds ratio	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Satisfaction with police actions (ref: neither)						
Satisfied	0.967	0.855	1.095	0.597 ***	0.453	0.788
Dissatisfied	0.131 ***	0.101	0.169	4.349 ***	3.423	5.524
Satisfaction with follow up (ref: neither)						
Satisfied	1.525 ***	1.375	1.692	0.577 ***	0.432	0.770
Dissatisfied	0.833 ***	0.725	0.956	2.570 ***	2.040	3.237
Satisfaction with treatment (ref: neither)						
Satisfied	9.323 ***	5.965	14.573	0.326 ***	0.253	0.420
Dissatisfied	0.832	0.387	1.791	1.604 ***	1.207	2.133
Satisfaction with ease of contact (ref: neither/NA)						
Satisfied	1.026	0.938	1.122	0.947	0.785	1.142
Dissatisfied	0.379 ***	0.280	0.513	1.552 ***	1.225	1.966
Satisfaction with waiting time (ref: neither/NA)						
Satisfied	1.596 ***	1.454	1.753	0.956	0.764	1.196
Dissatisfied	0.491 ***	0.378	0.639	1.795 ***	1.364	2.361
Type of crime experienced (ref: burglary)						
Violent	1.193 ***	1.060	1.341	1.700 ***	1.324	2.183
Vehicle crime	0.817 ***	0.729	0.916	0.835	0.643	1.084
Traffic crime	0.574 ***	0.486	0.679	1.589 ***	1.172	2.155
Racially motivated	0.936	0.698	1.255	1.338	0.885	2.024
Sex (ref: male)						
Female	1.135 ***	1.049	1.228	1.153 *	0.981	1.354
Age (ref: 16-24						
25-34	0.886 *	0.777	1.010	0.801 *	0.626	1.024
35-44	0.779 ***	0.683	0.888	0.705 ***	0.550	0.905
45-54	0.797 ***	0.693	0.917	0.720 **	0.548	0.946
55-64	0.839 **	0.721	0.977	0.545 ***	0.392	0.758
65-74	0.699 ***	0.578	0.845	0.503 ***	0.309	0.816
70 plus	0.737 *	0.541	1.005	0.498 *	0.225	1.105
Ethnic group (ref: White British/Irish)						
Mixed	0.833	0.618	1.121	1.088	0.659	1.796
Indian	1.376 ***	1.142	1.657	1.184	0.832	1.684
Pakistani/Bangladeshi	1.533 ***	1.233	1.907	0.927	0.575	1.493
Black Caribbean	1.054	0.878	1.265	0.955	0.664	1.373
African	1.474 ***	1.213	1.791	0.802	0.542	1.187
Other	1.091	0.957	1.245	1.333 **	1.058	1.678
Number of time victimised in last 12 months (ref: this occasion only)						
More than once	0.852 ***	0.756	0.960	1.126	0.927	1.368
Level of personal security (high scores=less secure)	0.717 ***	0.612	0.841	2.199 ***	1.606	3.012
Stated opinion of police prior to encounter (ref: mixed)						
Generally high	0.143 ***	0.131	0.157	1.691 ***	1.384	2.068
Generally low	2.017 ***	1.700	2.393	0.948	0.727	1.236
None	0.979	0.865	1.109	1.428 **	1.079	1.890

Unweighted base = 16,196

*** $p<0.01$; ** $p<0.05$; * $p<0.1$.

Source: CVS

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INTERLUDE III

The paper above demonstrates what Goldthorpe (2001) might characterise as robust associations between fair, decent, and indeed professional treatment and some of the outcomes the procedural justice model holds should flow from such treatment. Within the confines of the data available for the study some of the key predictions of Tyler's model look at to be at least plausible in the UK, and to have some consistent support in the London-based CVS data. Individual's experiences during encounters with officers do appear to have important effects on their opinions of the police, and these effects do seem to operate in ways consistent with the notions of procedural justice theory.

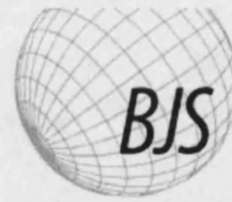
Paper three, along with paper two above, also contains evidence that opinions and orientations external to the relationship between police and individual may be equally important in judgement formation. Perceptions of disorder, community cohesion, fear of crime and (in)security are found to influence both how encounters are 'read' and overall opinions of the police. The social setting in which contacts are located will plainly impinge on those encounters. Furthermore, if we allow that CVS respondent's 'prior views' of the police are indicative of their level of diffuse support, the data presented offer some insight into how people may hold distinct, possibly even conflicting, opinions of the police institution (for which they might have one level or type of diffuse support) and the police organisation (for which they have a different level of type of specific support). Perhaps orientations toward the police institution affect and interact with the ways in which encounters with the police organisation are judged, and perhaps it is possible to place different value on one compared with the other.

These two later points are picked up by the second strand of the thesis. Paper four begins the process by assessing in considerable depth the links between lay assessments of crime and disorder and confidence in the police. It uses much more subtle data than were available for the third study to suggest that it is not fear of crime or insecurity *per se* which have the strongest influence on opinions, but visual cues of disorder and assessments of social and community breakdown. Indeed, these later factors are themselves related to perceptions and worry about crime; this may indeed account in part for the rather strong associations found in paper three above. That is, there may be a problem of omitted variables in the CVS analysis, and if measures of disorder and community cohesion had

been available and included in the models, the association between insecurity and confidence would have been much attenuated.

PAPER FOUR

The British Journal of Sociology 2009 Volume 60 Issue 3



Crime, policing and social order: on the expressive nature of public confidence in policing

Jonathan Jackson and Ben Bradford

Abstract

Public confidence in policing is receiving increasing attention from UK social scientists and policy-makers. The criminal justice system relies on legitimacy and consent to an extent unlike other public services: public support is vital if the police and other criminal justice agencies are to function both effectively and in accordance with democratic norms. Yet we know little about the forms of social perception that stand prior to public confidence and police legitimacy. Drawing on data from the 2003/2004 British Crime Survey and the 2006/2007 London Metropolitan Police Safer Neighbourhoods Survey, this paper suggests that people think about their local police in ways less to do with the risk of victimization (instrumental concerns about personal safety) and more to do with judgments of social cohesion and moral consensus (expressive concerns about neighbourhood stability, cohesion and loss of collective authority). Across England and Wales the police may not primarily be seen as providers of a narrow sense of personal security, held responsible for crime and safety. Instead the police may stand as symbolic 'moral guardians' of social stability and order, held responsible for community values and informal social controls. We also present evidence that public confidence in the London Metropolitan Police Service expresses broader social anxieties about long-term social change. We finish our paper with some thoughts on a sociological analysis of the cultural place of policing: confidence (and perhaps ultimately the legitimacy of the police) might just be wrapped up in broader public concerns about social order and moral consensus.

Keywords: Public confidence in policing; fear of crime; policing; legitimacy; disorder; social cohesion; community efficacy

The paradox is that not all that is policing lies in the police, to paraphrase Durkheim on the contract. The police will appear more successful the less they are actually necessary. The sources of order lie outside the ambit of

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> the police, in the political economy and culture of a society . . . Subtle, informal social controls, and policing processes embedded in other institutions, regulate most potential deviance. When these informal control processes are successful, the police will appear highly effective in crime prevention, and deal effectively and legitimately with the crime and disorder that do occur (Reiner 2000: xi).

1. Introduction

Policing and the cultural significance of the police have long been subjects of sociological enquiry (Banton 1964; Skolnick 1966; Bittner 1970; Cain 1973; Ericson and Haggerty 1997; Loader 1997; Manning 1997; Waddington 1999; Reiner 2000; Walker 2000; Freiberg 2001; Loader and Mulcahy 2003; Innes 2004a; Goldsmith 2005). While self-regulation is the most efficient route to cooperation and rule-observance (Tyler 1990), formal agents of social control provide for the public compliance of rules necessary for the functioning of a society: we need laws to govern human behaviour; and we need state force to ensure compliance with those laws (Hough 2003, 2004).

Societies depend on courts to administer justice, prisons to administer punishment, and police forces to catch criminals and deter crime. And just as social regulation is best achieved by tapping into individuals' internal motivations to obey the law, the criminal justice system relies on motivations toward cooperation and support (Hough 2007). At the heart of these is the public belief that agents of criminal justice act appropriately, properly and justly (Tyler 2006). According to Reiner (2006: 4) such legitimacy is: '. . . fraught and constantly subject to negotiation and definition, given the intimate relationship between policing, conflict and, ultimately, violence.' Legitimacy then leads individuals to engage in law-abiding behaviour, cooperate with policing efforts, and show deference to police tactics (Tyler and Huo 2002; Sunshine and Tyler 2003a, 2003b; Reisig, Bratton and Gertz 2007). Such a model of social regulation is of value because it is safer and more efficient than a deterrence model based on the use of force: reliance on citizens' internal motives for self-control reduces the cost, danger, and alienation associated with displays of force to affect citizen compliance with law.

The symbolism and cultural significance of policing has been the subject of sustained scholarly attention. The police protect us from crime but they also intrude into our lives. We want the police to target others – those we hold responsible for crime and disorder – and we clamour for more visible deterrent patrolling and a style of policing more responsive to local needs (Fitzgerald, Hough, Joseph and Qureshi 2002). But we resent it when the police turn their attention on us; we are especially sensitive to the fairness in which the police

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exercise their authority. The cultural place of, 'policing' may even condense public sensibilities towards social order, change and authority (Loader and Mulcahy 2003; Freiberg 2001; Manning 1997) perhaps we look to the police to defend community values and moral structures, especially when those values and structures are felt to be under threat (Jackson and Sunshine 2007).

Such a set of varied needs and desires reminds us that the police institution is entangled with questions of hierarchy, deference, commitment to society, moral consensus, and the urge for security. British-based sociologists and criminologists have written persuasively about the social and cultural significance of the police (see in particular Reiner 2000 and Loader and Mulcahy 2003). But actual empirical analyses have thus far been rare. This paper takes one step toward redressing this imbalance. It focuses not on issues of procedural justice (Tyler and Huo 2002; Sunshine and Tyler 2003a; Tyler 2006; Reisig, Bratton and Gertz 2007), nor on public encounters with the police (Skogan 2006; Bradford, Jackson and Stanko 2009), but on the social and cultural significance of public confidence in policing.

2. Goals of the paper

Drawing on data from the 2003/2004 British Crime Survey (BCS) and the 2006/2007 Metropolitan Police Safer Neighbourhoods Survey (SNS), two models of public confidence in policing are assessed. The first views the police as guarantors (to the public) of security and safety. According to this perspective, those individuals who are especially concerned about disorder and crime – and who are especially concerned about falling victim – are unlikely to express confidence in the police (to maintain order, fight crime, treat citizens fairly, and to be responsible and accountable for community needs and priorities). Skogan (2008) would call this an 'accountability model', where the public hold the police responsible for neighbourhood conditions that include fear, perceived risk of victimization and crime.[1] In the UK a slightly more restrictive model – namely that fear of crime and public perceptions of the risk of crime are key factors driving public confidence in police effectiveness – has been tested using data from a rural English population (Jackson and Sunshine 2007).

Yet Jackson and Sunshine found that public confidence in policing was decided not by perceptions of risk, nor by fear of crime. Instead, a different model of public confidence was more consistent with the data. Attitudes towards the effectiveness of the police were rooted in lay evaluations of social order, cohesion, trust, and moral consensus: people looked to the police to defend social values and behavioural norms. Moreover, the public seemed to want the police to be strong representatives of their community, as demonstrated in part by officers treating the public fairly and with dignity. This more

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'expressive' and neo-Durkheimian model stands in contrast to the 'instrumental' model. It holds that confidence in policing is rooted not in fear of crime nor in perceptions of risk, but in more symbolic yet 'day-to-day' concerns about neighbourhood cohesion, collective efficacy and the erosion of values that keep public behaviour in check.

This paper extends and develops the empirical work of Jackson and Sunshine (2007) by drawing on recent theoretical advances in the cultural sociology of policing (chiefly Girling, Loader and Sparks 2000; Reiner 2000; Freiberg 2001; Loader and Mulcahy 2003). The question is not just whether the findings generalize to a fresh and stronger dataset. It is also whether the analysis can be broadened to include anxieties over social change and the loss of moral authority and discipline. Findings confirm that attitudes toward crime and policing are shaped more by lay assessments of (non-criminal) symbols of social order and control than by instrumental concerns about safety and crime. Legitimacy – as expressed through confidence in the police – thus seems rooted in public diagnoses of (non-criminal) social stability and demands on the police to defend the moral order. Reiner (2000) suggested that the police are faced with the paradox that they appear more successful the less they are necessary. This paper concludes that not only are the police judged by the lack of need for them, but also by public diagnoses of local values and moral structures that shape perceptions of crime. Informal social controls regulate most deviance, and when these informal social controls are successful, the police may appear successful; when the informal social controls are seen to be weak – and when people are concerned about the long-term erosion of neighbourhood cohesion and social capital – the police may already have lost the confidence of the communities they serve.

3. The social and cultural significance of public confidence in policing

If experiences of and orientations toward the police are implicated in broader structures of feeling and affect toward law, order, authority and cohesion, how might these rather abstract concepts manifest in people's everyday experience and practical consciousness? Perhaps the answer to this question lies at the confluence of ideas and emotions around nation, state, cohesion and belonging. Loader (1997) outlines a process through which the police have come to act as a 'condensation symbol' (c.f. Turner 1974) for an array of sensibilities and outlooks which coalesce around a particular version of English national identity. Using Bourdieu's notion of symbolic power, Loader (1997: 4) discusses the ways in which experience of the police connects with pre-existing 'dispositions towards, and fantasies of, policing'. These in turn are largely drawn from a repertoire recalling a golden age of cohesiveness, stability and national efficacy – the immediate postwar years – which has subsequently been degraded

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by the changes arising from modernity, globalization, and mass immigration. Loader and Mulcahy (2003:315) also underline the salience for a certain section of the English public of a 'police force of the imagination', against which the present institution can only ever compare badly. In this body of work, the image of Dixon of Dock Green as the quintessential English policeman is important less for any apogee of police legitimacy he may represent (Reiner 2000) than for the fact that he conjures up the time before the fall when the (explicitly English) nation was cohesive, strong and at peace with itself.

That Dixon represents a pre-lapsarian past which contrasts starkly with the modern day is in no small measure due to changes within the police force itself. As Reiner (1992) has documented, there has been a 'long erosion' of the image of the traditional British Bobby – from Dixon to masked SWAT-style marksman. However, it seems likely that both images coexist in the public mind, and both are called upon at different conjunctures in the construction of 'the police' not only as a sociological institution but also as a group of people encountered 'on the streets'. The imagery of the police is therefore multi-faceted, contradictory, and open to many different interpretations. The police are at once a threat and a promise, wielding legitimate force to maintain order, embodying and representing the state to its citizens in all its negative as well as positive aspects.

According to much theoretical work in the sociological and criminological literature, the police thus seem to convey images of order, justice and stability (or their absence) whilst also being expressive of the 'spirit' of the nation-state (Loader and Mulcahy 2003; Reiner 2000; Taylor 1999; Waddington 1999). More prosaically the police present a highly visible instantiation of state power, with which it is none the less possible to interact on a face-to-face basis – a position which contrasts with that of many other representations of the state. This multi-layered cultural significance implies the police may embody both 'the' national consciousness *and*, in a very immediate way, the state which assumes control over, and responsibility for, the nation: the police are deeply implicated in production of the legitimate political order which reproduces recognition of the state's right to assume this control (Habermas 1979).

Drawing on both Weber and Gramsci, Taylor (1999: 21–2) argues that the state's struggle for legitimacy operates on different levels and in different ways: through ceremonies of national unification; through the provision of economic or material support for the population; and through a constant process of readjustment by national leaderships in the face of different political, economic and social demands from subordinate populations at specific historical junctures. The uniformed police, as 'symbolic guardians' of social order and justice, are involved at all three levels. Most importantly the third suggests a police role, whether ceremonial/ideological or practical, which is not static but involved in processes of reinterpretation and dispute resulting from competing demands on the state and the specific circumstances which arise as

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it attempts to reaffirm its legitimacy. This argument places the police at the centre of a web of relationships, which, while of course implicating the maintenance of practical security, place heavy emphasis on the production, negotiation and reproduction of symbolic and social order.

Just as the police lie at the heart of state legitimation processes, policing may also be an active centre of the social order in a broader, Geertzian, sense. The police may act to produce and communicate contested meanings: order/disorder, justice/injustice, normality/deviance (Loader 2006). Policing mediates collective identity, and as an institution relays messages of recognition and belonging or, conversely, misrecognition and exclusion (Waddington 1999). The police are not only representatives of the nation/state and servants of the people who comprise it, they are also in some ways constructive of the diverse social groups through which the modern polity is constituted (Ericson and Haggerty 1997; Herbert 2006). Policing and understandings of policing are suffused with messages about the condition of society, the position of people within it, and the relation between state and individual:

> Every stop, every search, every arrest, every group of youths moved on, every abuse of due process, every failure to respond to call or complaint, every racist . . . sexist . . . homophobic (comment), every diagnosis of the crime problem, every depiction of criminals – all these send small, routine, authoritative signals about societies conflicts, cleavages and hierarchies about whose claims are considered legitimate within it, about whose status identity is to be affirmed or denied as part of it. (Loader 2006: 211)

Discussing views of the police among 'well-off', largely middle-aged residents of an English town, Girling, Loader and Sparks (2000) demonstrate the complexity of the relationship between police and community within a rubric of the ongoing imagination and reproduction of nation and state. Concluding their qualitative work, the authors suggest that the figure of the police officer is a symbol through which, simultaneously, a settled, cohesive national past can be recalled and a troubled, fractured present can be explicated. The image of the police speaks powerfully to concerns about social order, social problems, and the way in which 'things aren't what they used to be'. Such concerns are intimately bound up with concrete policing practise and policies. For example a perceived lack of street patrols is experienced as the loss of an 'identifiable authority figure, known by, and belonging to, the community' (Girling, Loader and Sparks 2000: 123) and reflect anxieties about changes in the social and moral order of the town:

> Here the subsequent 'withdrawal' of the police is understood as a coming apart of the 'glue' that once held a neighbourhood together and guaranteed its now fondly remembered quality of life. (Girling, Loader and Sparks 2000: 124).

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As descriptions of the majority or dominant set of orientations toward the police, the ideas outlined above appear convincing. But it is important to recognize that they will not hold for all people or for all social groups. In particular, opinions are likely to be very different among those who have long histories of difficult relations with the police or (more likely, and) who are excluded from the dominant social order the police represent. The two most important groups here are of course young people (Loader 1996; McAra and McVie 2005) and those from ethnic minority groups (Bowling and Philips 2002). Just as the police represent for many order, stability and cohesion, to people from these social groups they may represent the unfair priorities of the dominant social order, an interfering state, or even oppression. As Loader (2006) notes, calls for policing responses to problems of low level disorder are often also calls for attention to be directed *at* subaltern groups, leading to potentially divergent patterns of association between the maintenance of social order, policing and confidence. Prevalent structures of feeling among marginalized or excluded groups may therefore differ significantly from the dominant tropes outlined above, although it would be a mistake to assume that confidence *per se* will automatically be lower (see below), or that those from subordinate groups desire very different forms of policing (c.f. Carr, Napolitano and Keating 2007).

4. Instrumental and expressive models of public confidence in policing

Such sensibilities – wherein the police represent and condense notions of social cohesion, order and the strength of formal and informal social controls, whether these be at the local level or at that of the imagined national community (Anderson 1983) – may also underpin public confidence in the police. The idea motivating the current empirical investigation is as follows. When people think about the police and their 'crime-fighting' activities, they also think about what 'crime' stands for (erosion of norms and social ties that underpin group life) and what 'policing' stands for (organized defence of the norms and social ties). Individuals who are concerned about long-term social change, who see the modern world as too individualized and too atomized, then look to the police to defend a sense of order, precisely at the time when the police are themselves moving in many ways toward becoming a modern, efficient, public service shorn of such 'old-fashioned' symbolic elements (Hough 2003, 2004, 2007).

Notwithstanding such 'modernization', other current trends in policing correspond quite closely to such a symbolic or relational perspective on public confidence in policing. The National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) and Neighbourhood Policing, for example, explicitly aim not only reduce fear of crime and improve feelings of safety, but also to reduce

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anti-social behaviour, improve quality of life, *and* increase public confidence (Tuffin, Morris and Poole 2006). These and other policies draw on the signal crimes approach (Innes 2004a, 2004b) and other academic work which has suggested that it is what people feel about the police within a broad social context which is most important in influencing trust and support.

The contention of this 'expressive' model of public confidence is therefore that judgments about public effectiveness – like fear of crime – are driven not be a misplaced and abstract sense of 'crime out of control', but rather by lay assessments of cohesion, social control and civility that reflect concerns about the breakdown and fragmentation of society (for speculation about this, see *inter alia*: Biderman et al. 1967; Garofalo and Laub 1978; Merry, 1981; Scheingold 1984; Sparks, 1992; Bursik and Gramsick 1993; Dowds and Ahrendt 1995; Hale 1996; Girling, Loader and Sparks 1998; Taylor and Jamieson 1998; Girling, Loader and Sparks 2000; Freiberg 2001; Jackson 2004). As Girling et al. argue, anxiety about crime expresses people's sense of the place they inhabit and of:

> ... *their place* within a world of hierarchies, troubles, opportunities and insecurities ... [the] wider domain of moral judgements, attachments and arguments about blaming, explaining and diagnosing diverse questions of order and insecurity as these arose for them in the particular settings of their daily life. (Girling, Loader and Sparks 2000: 45)

According to such a perspective, confidence in the effectiveness of local policing is shaped by public perceptions of social order and cohesion. It follows that both fear of crime and confidence express the same judgments of community conditions. The neo-Durkheimian model developed by Jackson and Sunshine (2007) takes this as its starting point (cf. Freiberg 2001), proposing that a sense of order and cohesiveness – the day-to-day things that define a healthy social environment and constitute conditions conducive to crime – is key. People look to the police to be guardians of social order – as prototypical representatives of the community (Sunshine and Tyler 2003b) – and when norms and values are seen to be in decline, they turn to the police to defend the moral structure and reassert a sense of social control. In this way, the police are both a symbolic and a practical means of reconstituting a shaky social order.[2] Jackson (2004) found that these attitudes and anxieties shaped how people made sense of the stability of their neighbourhood, and thus indirectly shaped consequent worries about crime. Might the same hold true for public confidence in policing?

In contrast, the instrumental model states that fear of crime erodes faith in the criminal justice system; anxiety about victimization erodes confidence and support for the police, and leads people to take punitive stances on issues of sentencing and criminal justice (Tyler and Boeckmann 1997; Boeckmann and Tyler 1997). The public look to the police to perform an instrumental role: to

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make people feel safe. If this model holds to improve public support the police should attempt to dampen down excessive fear and correct inaccurate beliefs about crime, perhaps by educating the public or by publicizing police successes.

5. Study one

Method

Concerned primarily with establishing rates of victimization in the general population, the British Crime Survey (BCS) also addresses a range of crime-related topics, including fear of crime, public confidence in policing, and exposure to illegal drugs. The 2003/2004 sweep had a core sample of 37,000 and a boost of 3,000 individuals from non-white groups. The analysis presented here draws upon data from a sub-sample (specifically, sub-sample D2 which contains data from one-eighth of all respondents) since only this sub-sample were fielded all the questions needed for the analysis. Also contained in the 2003/04 BCS dataset are variables derived from the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).[3]

The analysis proceeds in four steps.[4] The first is the statistical assessment of the partial association between fear and confidence, controlling for a range of factors but with a particular interest in levels of crime in respondents' neighbourhoods. It could be that fear of crime acts as a proxy for more objective conditions. So, fear of crime might be a statistically significant predictor of confidence not because it is causally related, but rather because crime is the real causal factor, and crime is related to both fear and confidence. But if fear of crime is associated with confidence net of levels of crime then it really is about perception: in high-crime areas, people who report no fear will typically feel that their local police force is doing a good job (despite the incidence of crime); in low-crime areas, people who feel anxious about crime will typically have little confidence in the police (despite the incidence of crime).

The second step is to introduce into the model people's perceptions of disorder, cohesion and informal social control in their neighbourhood. If these perceptual variables are more important than worry about crime then we have some evidence for the neo-Durkhiemian model. Namely, that more day-to-day issues of neighbourhood stability and breakdown come to the fore when people evaluate police performance. The third step of analysis is to assess the extent to which fear of crime and social perception play roles in shaping public confidence in policing across localities of differing crime rates. For example, it may be that fear of crime has a greater impact in areas of high crime; perception of social cohesion and collective efficacy may have a greater impact in areas of low crime. It could be a 'luxury' to think of the police as old-fashioned

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defenders of norms, values and a sense of community cohesion: with greater problems of crime, people may desire a more instrumental sense of reassurance. Accordingly, this study estimates interaction effects between, separately, fear of crime and crime, and social perception and crime.

The fourth step integrates the preceding analysis, using structural equation modelling to test a full meditational model that makes several predictions. First, levels of crime predict perceptions of the environment (disorder and social cohesion). Second, perceptions of the environment shape assessments of the likelihood of victimization. Third, both perceptions of the environment and assessments of likelihood influence both worry about crime. Finally, perceptions of the environment are hypothesized to predict public confidence in policing.

Results

Defining and measuring concepts

Public confidence in policing is measured using a 'global' measure, where respondents are asked whether they thought that their local police force were doing an excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor job. The 2003/2004 BCS did not field questions that covered specific dimensions of effectiveness, fairness and community engagement (see Bradford, Jackson and Stanko 2009), unfortunately. However the global measure is assumed to tap into an amalgam of effectiveness, fairness and community engagement (for evidence on this see Jackson, et al. 2009).

Separate indices are constructed from multiple indicators of (a) worry about crime,[5] (b) perception of incivilities, (c) perception of social cohesion, (d) perception of informal social control (see also the concept of collective efficacy, which links social cohesion to the willingness of residents to intervene, see Sampson, Raudenbush and Earls 1997; Sampson and Raudenbush 1999), and (e) interviewer assessment of disorder. Using ordinal latent trait modelling with full information maximum likelihood estimation (using Latent Gold 4.0), factor scores are saved to create a single index for each construct. Ordinal latent trait analysis treats the indicators as ordinal categorical variables (compared to treating them as continuous) – which of course they are. Full information maximum likelihood estimation draws upon all possible information, meaning one does not drop missing values nor substitute them with the mean (for example). The Appendix Table shows the factor loadings, which are acceptable for the present purposes.

Control variables

The control variables are gender, age, ethnicity, social class, household income, area-type (rural, urban and inner-city), and whether or not the respondent had

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been a victim of crime in the previous 12 months. While the BCS gathers data on public contact with the police, most of these data pertain to survey follow-up A. The analysis had to exclude either aspects of social perception (included in follow-up D) or police contact. Because the focus of the study is on social perception, the impact of public encounters with the police on public confidence in policing is not assessed (for this see Skogan 2006; Bradford, Jackson and Stanko in press).

Modelling public confidence in policing

The first step is to examine the association between worry about crime and public confidence in policing, controlling for the variables listed above. Because the response variable is ordinal (five categories) ordinal regression is used since it allows one to specify a categorical variable as the response but unlike multinomial logistic regression takes into account the ordered nature of the measure. SPSS (version 15) employs a proportional odds model. Therefore, if the explanatory variable increases by one unit while all other explanatory remain unchanged, the odds are multiplied by $\exp(B)$ for every category of the response variable.

Table I (Model I) shows that victimization experience is associated with low levels of confidence. Males are more likely to judge their local police to do a poor job than females, as are older people; Blacks and Asians are more likely to judge their local police positively than Whites, corresponding to results from more recent waves of the BCS which have reported confidence to be higher in Black and Asian ethnic groups than among Whites (for example see Jansson et al. 2007: 9). Social class, household income and area type (rural versus inner-city and urban versus inner-city) are not statistically significant predictors. Model I also shows a statistically significant association between worry about crime and dissatisfaction with the local police ($\exp(B)$ 1.375; $p < 0.001$): thus, for every one unit increase in level of worry we expect the odds of moving from one category to the next to increase by 37.5 per cent. In other words the greater the intensity of worry about crime, the worse the rating of local police performance.

However once one controls for lay perceptions of disorder, social cohesion and informal social control, the impact of worry about crime on public confidence in local policing decreases somewhat (Model II, Table I). Instead public perception of incivility and informal social control is more important. Therefore – and as found by Jackson and Sunshine (2007) – it is perception of cohesion more than worry about crime that seems to drive public confidence in policing. However contrary to Jackson and Sunshine (2007) disorder and fear of crime are each statistically significant predictors of public satisfaction with the police.

It is striking how little effect area-level measures of crime and quality of the living environment has on public confidence in policing (in sharp contrast to

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Table I: *Ordinal regression predicting public satisfaction with their local police*[a]

	Model I				Model II			
	Odds ratio	95% CI lower	95% CI upper	*p*	Odds ratio	95% CI lower	95% CI upper	*p*
Crime and disorder, measured at the Electoral Ward (IMD 2004)	1.031*	1.002	1.060	0.036	1.008	0.979	1.037	0.604
Living environment, measured at the Electoral Ward (IMD 2004)	1.009	0.982	1.036	0.507	1.013	0.986	1.040	0.359
BCS interviewer rating of disorder[b]	1.055	0.969	1.150	0.218	0.956	0.876	1.044	0.321
Area type: rural[c]	0.832	0.634	1.093	0.186	1.037	0.787	1.365	0.798
Area type: urban	0.790*	0.626	0.997	0.047	0.839	0.665	1.060	0.142
Number of adults in the household	1.154***	1.077	1.236	<0.001	1.133***	1.058	1.215	<0.001
Gender: female	0.850*	0.745	0.968	0.015	0.878	0.770	1.002	0.053
Age (continuous)	1.001	0.999	1.002	0.528	1.001	0.999	1.003	0.333
Ethnicity: Other[d]	1.083	0.592	1.982	0.796	1.087	0.593	1.992	0.786
Ethnicity: Mixed	2.107	0.820	5.414	0.122	2.287	0.891	5.866	0.085
Ethnicity: Asian	0.391***	0.240	0.638	<0.001	0.393***	0.240	0.643	<0.001
Ethnicity: Black	0.408***	0.242	0.690	0.001	0.398***	0.235	0.675	0.001
Social class: Managerial and technical[e]	1.155	0.843	1.583	0.369	1.115	0.812	1.532	0.502
Social class: Skilled non-manual	1.151	0.830	1.596	0.400	1.132	0.815	1.574	0.459
Social class: Skilled manual	1.266	0.912	1.757	0.158	1.256	0.903	1.747	0.177
Social class: Semi-skilled	0.964	0.685	1.356	0.834	0.958	0.679	1.351	0.807
Social class: Unskilled	1.314	0.895	1.930	0.163	1.331	0.904	1.959	0.148
Income insecurity: 'A bit of a problem to find £100'[f]	0.788	0.554	1.119	0.183	0.811	0.569	1.155	0.246
Income insecurity: 'No problem to find £100'	0.744	0.530	1.046	0.089	0.811	0.576	1.143	0.232
General health (1 = very good, 5 = very bad)	1.476***	1.278	1.705	<0.001	1.370***	1.185	1.585	<0.001
Victim of crime (or not)	1.094*	1.010	1.185	0.028	1.079	0.995	1.169	0.065
Frequency of worry about crime[g]	1.375***	1.261	1.498	<0.001	1.243***	1.138	1.358	<0.001
Perception of neighbourhood disorder[g]					1.340***	1.237	1.452	<0.001
Perception of neighbourhood social cohesion[g]					0.964	0.889	1.045	0.375
Perception of neighbourhood informal social control[g]					1.543***	1.363	1.747	<0.001

Notes:
[a] Response variable took 4 levels: 'good job'; 'fair job'; 'poor job'; and 'very poor job'. The Brant test revealed a violation of the parallel odds assumptions only in one of the income insecurity contrasts. Given that income insecurity is here treated only as a control variable, it was decided to go ahead with the ordinal regression.
[b] Assessed by the interviewer.
[c] Reference category: 'Inner-city'
[d] Reference category: 'White'
[e] Reference category: 'Professional'
[f] Reference category: 'Impossible to find £100'
[g] Scores saved from ordinal latent trait modelling of (2–4) single indicators for each latent construct using full information maximum likelihood estimation. Software used: LatentGold 4.0. Unweighted data. Base *n* for Model I = 3,650, for Model II = 3,650. *Source*: sub-sample D2 of the 03/04 British Crime Survey.

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the findings of Sampson and Bartusch's 1998 Chicago study). In Model II, neither crime levels, quality of the environment, nor interviewer assessment of disorder predicts public confidence in policing. Clearly fear of crime, perceptions of disorder and informal social control are far more important to public confidence in policing than objective measures of crime and disorder.

The next step is to assess whether the level of crime in an area alters the relative importance of worry about crime, public perceptions of disorder and lay concerns about social cohesion. Fear might reasonably play a stronger role in public confidence in policing in an area of high crime than in an area of low crime. Strikingly however, when interaction effects between the IMD measure of crime and each of the four perceptual variables are entered into the regression model none are statistically significant (the parameter estimates are not presented here for reasons of brevity). These findings show that it does not matter whether respondents lived in an area with high levels of crime or not – perceptions of disorder and cohesion still drive dissatisfaction with the local police with equal weight.

Modeling fear of crime and public confidence in policing in the BCS

The final step is to test an integrative model of fear of crime and public confidence in policing. Figure I presents the results, produced using AMOS 7.0. The fit of the model is good according to approximate fit indices (RMSEA = 0.041, CFI = 0.946), but not according to tests of exact fit (χ^2 7859, 124 df, $p < 0.001$). As is customary however, the researcher places most importance on the approximate fit indices since the Chi-Square statistic is extremely sensitive to sample size. The first thing to note from Figure I is that confidence in the local police is associated more with public perception of disorder and informal social control than with worry about crime. Secondly, a good deal of the statistical effect of judgments of community conditions (disorder, cohesion and informal social control) on worry about crime is mediated by the assessment of victimization risk. However, there is a strong direct association between disorder and worry about crime, which suggests that fear of crime is correlated with both the judgment of victimization risk and a more diffuse sense of disorder in the environment. Moreover, social cohesion has a small predictive role with fear of crime, so feeling that one has a supportive community around one may be associated with lower anxieties about one's personal safety. Finally, the statistical effect of living in a high-crime area on perceived risk, worry about crime, *and* confidence in policing is almost entirely mediated through perception of disorder, cohesion and informal social control. An effect decomposition shows total standardized effects of crime levels on (a) worry about crime of 0.179 and (b) confidence in policing of 0.087, with nearly all of these being indirect effects.

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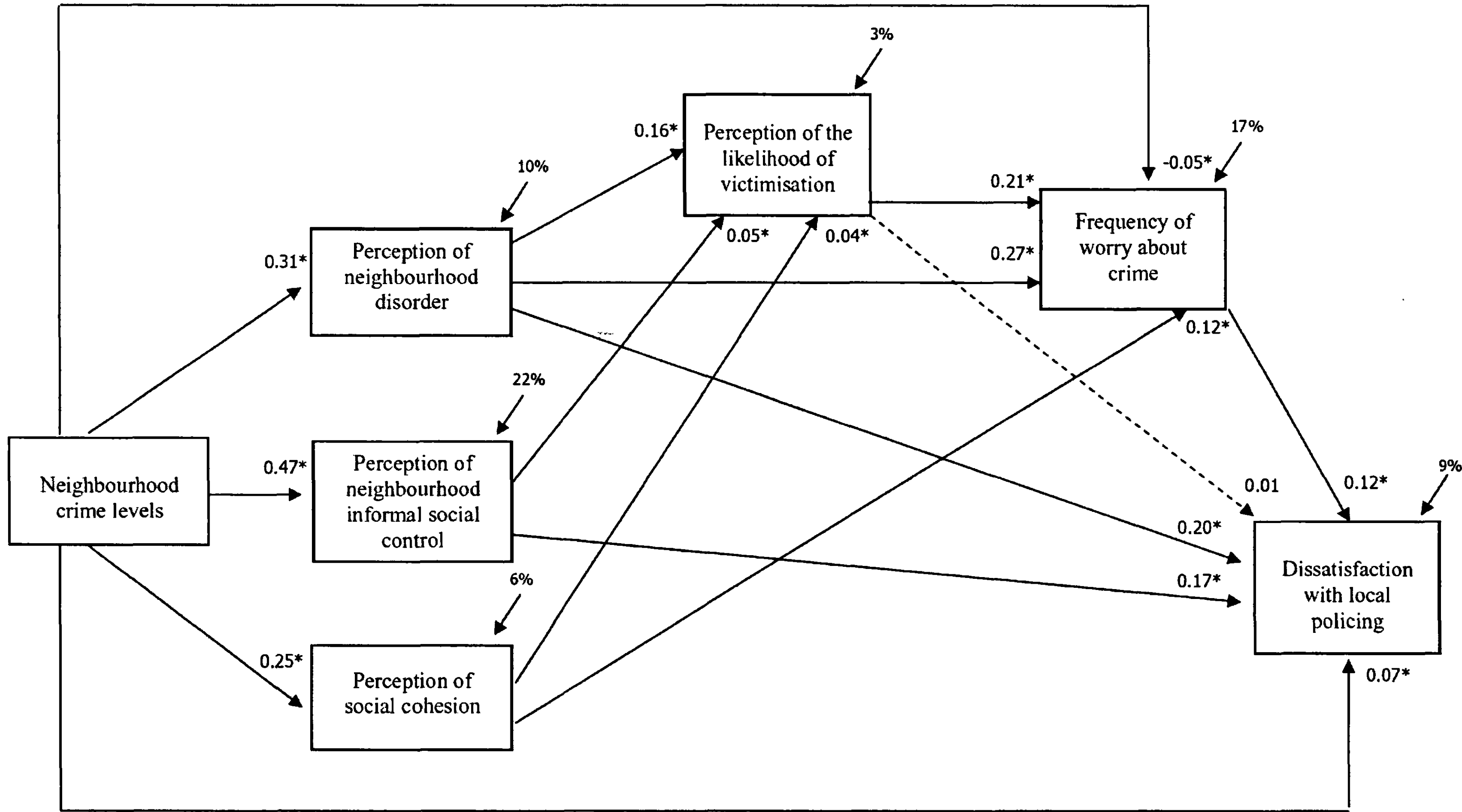
Figure 1: *Fear of crime and public confidence in policing*



Notes:
* significant, $p < 0.05$
Standardized coefficients Chi-square = 4734 (107 df); $p < 0.001$ RMSEA = 0.034; CFI = 0.937
Standardized regression weights are provided. The measurement portion of the model is absent for visual ease.
A high score on each latent variable equals high crime, significant concerns, frequent worries, and low confidence.

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6. Study two

Study one showed that while neighbourhood crime levels and worry about crime have small impacts on confidence in the local police, far more important were perceptions of social cohesion, informal social control and especially levels of perceived disorder (net of actual levels of crime and interviewer assessments of respondent's local area). The latter two set of concerns had large, significant effects on confidence. Ideas about disorder and social cohesion also had indirect effects, with their impact on public confidence in policing mediated by fear of crime.

However some of the tools available in the BCS for this analysis were relatively broad-brush. First, the measure of confidence in the police in Study One was a single global indicator. Such overall ratings ('How good or bad a job are the local police doing?') are likely to encompass ideas about police effectiveness, fairness and engagement with the community. But it is useful to tease these apart. Study Two focuses on just one of these elements, public confidence in the effectiveness of the police. Second, conceptualizations about the position of the police within structures of feeling which encompass both nation, state and belonging *and* ideas about crime, law and disorder are only partly represented in data representing perceptions of cohesion, social control, crime and disorder alone; concerns about broader social change and attitudes toward law and order are potentially just as important. In short, the police may be judged to be ineffective not when they 'fail' to control crime, but when the community and wider society is experienced as breaking down and when law and order is not respected.

Method

The Metropolitan Police's Safer Neighbourhoods Survey (SNS) provides an opportunity (a) to take local area effects better into account, (b) to more precisely measure confidence in police effectiveness, and (c) to broaden out the analysis to include concerns about law, order and wider social change. Conducted during April, May and June 2006 through a programme of face-to-face interviews in the homes of respondents, the Safer Neighbourhoods Survey obtained responses from a sample of 2,844 residents in 7 wards across London, or in around 400 in each. These 7 areas were chosen to represent a diverse cross-section in socio-demographic terms (according to ACORN and Indices of Multiple Deprivation data) and to be spread throughout London. Selection of respondents was carried out using random probability sampling techniques in each of the 7 wards sampled.[6]

SEM is again used in the analysis. A model is developed which combines similar variables to those used in study one with measures representing wider

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attitudes to law, order and long-term social change. It also proposes a similar set of relationships. Both wider attitudes and 'objective' local conditions are expected to affect ideas about neighbourhood disorder and social control: concerns about social change and law/order are assumed to be deeply held – constitutive of other ideas and feelings – and therefore formative of perceptions of local disorder and levels of informal social control. Net of the condition of their local area, people who perceive a breakdown in society generally are likely to perceive a greater level of disorder in their neighbourhood. Secondly, concerns about local disorder and informal control are expected to in turn influence worry about crime. Thirdly, wider social concerns, neighbourhood concerns and worry about crime are all expected to affect public confidence in the effectiveness of the police.

Results

Results from the SEM model (using AMOS 7.0) are shown in Figure II. The model is specified in such a way as to replicate the analysis used in study one as closely as possible. The latent variables in the model mirror the ordinal latent trait constructs shown in study one, and the indicators (along with standardized regression coefficients for the measurement parts of the model) are shown in the Appendix Table. The 'objective' condition of the local area is represented in two ways: dummy variables for the survey wards; and a latent construct measuring interviewer's assessments the level of litter, vandalism and housing conditions of the interviewees home and its immediate area (see Appendix Table). Note that for ease of interpretation and presentation effects from the six dummy variables that represent the seven wards are omitted from Figure II. But in essence, the effect of ward of residence is held constant when estimating all parts of the structural model.

Figure II shows that the model fitted well according to the approximate fit measures (RMSEA = 0.039; CFI = 0.939). As envisaged, the condition of respondent's homes and immediate locality (as measured by interviewers) predicts both perceptions of local disorder and informal social control and, through these, worry about crime and views about police effectiveness. There is also a significant direct path from interviewer assessments to police effectiveness. Net of respondent's ward and the 'real' level of neighbourhood disorder, concerns about long-term social change and attitudes toward law and order also predict perceptions of neighbourhood disorder and social control, and through these worry about crime and ideas about police effectiveness. There is also a direct path from concerns about long term social change to police effectiveness. Finally, and most importantly for the ideas developed here, real and perceived neighbourhood disorder and concerns about informal social control are stronger predictors than public confidence in the effectiveness of

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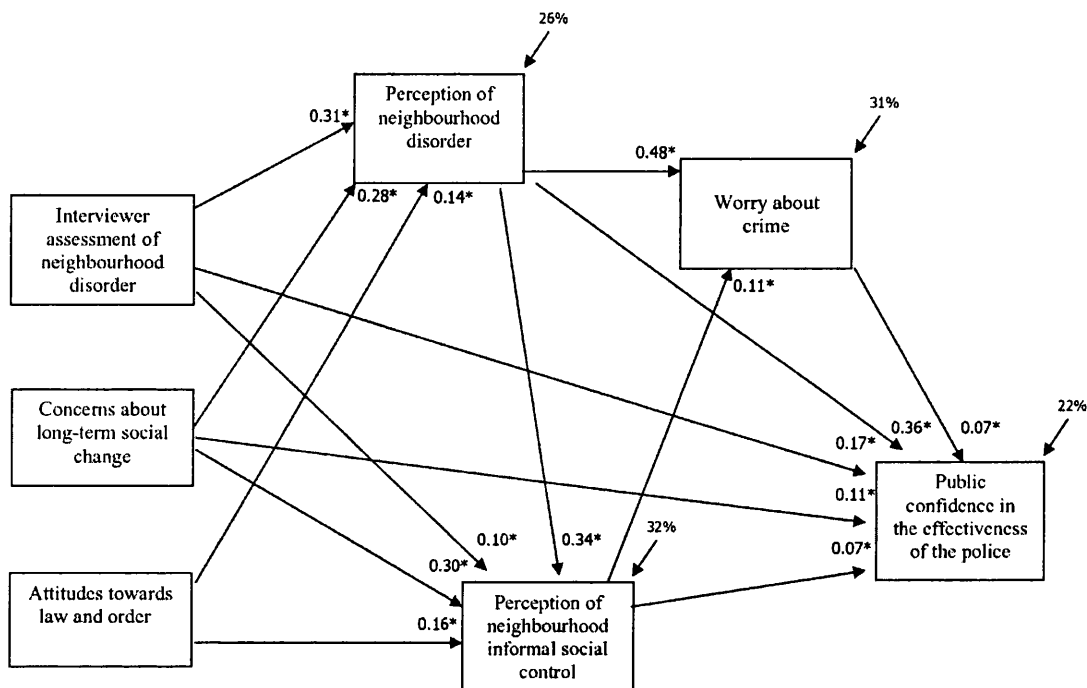
Figure II: *Public confidence in the effectiveness of the local police*



Notes:
* significant, $p < 0.05$
Standardized coefficients Chi-square = 2282 (427 df); $p < 0.001$ RMSEA = 0.039; CFI = 0.939
Standardized regression weights are provided. The measurement portion of the model is absent for visual ease.
Fixed effects were estimated to hold constant area when estimating all structural paths.
A high score on each latent variable equals significant concerns, frequent worries, and low confidence.

the police than does worry about crime. Furthermore, the size of the direct statistical effect of concerns about long-term social change on ideas is at least as large, if not larger, than the direct statistical effect of worry about crime; ideas about long term social change and law and order also have mediated predictive paths to confidence in police effectiveness.[7]

The model shown in Figure II again offers strong support for the idea that in making assessments of their local police people draw on perceptions of local disorder and cohesion far more than on the extent to which they worry about crime. While the police may be held to account over crime and blamed if people feel more worried by it, ideas about police effectiveness are influenced far more by feelings about low-level social disorder, mechanisms of informal social control, and wider concerns. On an instrumental view, while the first of these might be within the police's power to influence, such issues are generally far beyond the independent influence of the police. But perhaps more importantly it is hard to imagine that the link between (for example) concerns about decline in a shared sense of right and wrong and poor police performance is

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fully articulated, or even consciously expressed. It seems more likely that the police are indeed acting as a condensation symbol, perhaps for both the community (nation) within which such values are decaying and the state which does not step in to shore them up.

Finally, Figure II suggests that concerns about long-term social change, perceptions of changes in belonging, trust and shared values, have an impact on ideas about police effectiveness to a much greater extent than do attitudes toward law and order. The latter represents opinions concerning other institutions – the family, the courts and schools (see Appendix Table) – while the former latent variables cover concerns about *people* living in the local area. The police may be blamed to an extent for perceived failings of other institutions, but more pertinently there is a suggestion of a deep association between police and community. Perhaps the police are indeed prototypical group representatives, an available, and obvious, receptacle for feelings of dislocation, decline, and the breakdown in trust and shared values.

7. Discussion

Investigating the relationship between public confidence in the police and broader social concerns about moral consensus and social cohesion, the two studies presented here support the argument that confidence expresses concerns about neighbourhood stability and broader social anxieties. Across England and Wales public confidence in policing was associated with lay judgments of disorder and informal social control. Moreover once these relationships were accounted for, fear of crime was only weakly correlated with satisfaction with local policing. This pattern of relationships held no matter the actual level of crime (according to police statistics summarized by the IMD at the level of Electoral Ward). In both high and low crime areas, therefore, disorder and informal social control predicted levels of public confidence in police. Even controlling for interview*er* assessments of disorder had no impact on the role of interview*ee* perception: disorder really was in the 'eye of the beholder' (Merry 1981; Harcourt 2001; Sampson and Raudenbush 2004; Jackson 2004; cf. Gau and Pratt 2008). In sum, the data suggest that individuals became dissatisfied with their local police force partly as a result of judging their streets and their community to lack order and informal social control – a lack of confidence was only weakly explained by public fears over crime. On an immediate level this is perhaps not surprising: low-level disorder and incivilities are likely to be much more common, and therefore more meaningful, in the lives of many people than the experience of serious or even more 'ordinary' criminality.[8]

Although local-level data from London broadly confirmed these findings (Study Two) this second set of data also went further. Worry about crime had

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only a moderately strong correlation with views about police effectiveness, while more important predictive factors were views about local disorder and informal social control. These in turn were affected not only by objective local conditions but also by ideas about wider changes in society and orientations toward law and order (see also Jackson 2004). There was moreover a direct link between the former and evaluations of police effectiveness. It is not just that disorder is more common in people's lives and therefore drives confidence in the police; such disorder is experienced and interpreted in the light of broader orientations toward both law and order and wider social change. However, it is likely that the current model should be seen, more broadly, to involve feedback. Specifically, confidence in policing might inculcate a sense of 'ontological security' (Loader 2006) and encourage a more trusting and positive relationship to one's social and physical environment, thus lowering perceptions of disorder/cohesion, and in turn reducing fear of crime and increasing confidence over time. As with all studies based on cross-sectional data, we have only one snapshot. But while there a clear issue of endogeneity in the present investigation, the order we presented in the model is most suitable to our comparison of the instrumental and expressive models of public confidence in policing.

Therefore – and as found by Jackson and Sunshine (2007) – these two studies suggests that lay judgments of community conditions drove both fear of crime and public confidence in policing. The more people felt their environment to lack civility, trust and informal social control, the more they felt at risk of crime, the more they worried, and (independently of fear) the greater the dissatisfaction with policing. This finding strengthens existing evidence that fear of crime is less about some abstract sense of the crime problem and more an expression of day-to-day concerns about civility, trust and social stability (Bannister 1993; Girling, Loader and Sparks 2000; Jackson 2006, 2008). It also appears that people think about the police less in terms of 'risk' and 'crime' (as Garland (2001) put it) and more in terms of local disorder, civility and social order. Incivilities signal to observers that individuals and authorities have lost control over the community and are no longer in the position to preserve order. Disorder represents disrespect to local norms; it communicates that commonly accepted standards concerning public behaviour are being eroded. People look to the police to reassert social control and protect a desired sense of ease, predictability and civility in their environment. They look to the authority of the group – the formal agent of social control which represents both nation and state – to defend and restore the norms, values and social cohesion of the community seen to be under threat (Tyler and Boeckmann 1997; Sunshine and Tyler 2003a; Jackson and Sunshine 2007).[9] The reasons behind public anxieties about crime and the function and performance of the police thus lie much deeper than 'mere' criminality: public confidence in policing might just express a whole host of concerns about social cohesion and

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moral consensus (Jackson 2004, 2006; Jackson and Sunshine 2007; see also Freiberg's (2001) discussion of the 'deeper emotional or affective dimensions of crime and its place in society').

On this basis it seems that the public have a conception of security and concomitant policing practices which is both wide and deep (Loader 2006; Loader and Walker 2007). As well as problems related to crime, a whole range of social and economic issues have an impact on fear of crime and confidence in the police. The natural response to this – indeed one which the public appears to desire – is the provision of what Loader has called pervasive policing. However, while there seems little doubt that the public *wants* the police to 'bring back' social control and a more stable, predictable environment – and while these issues *are* important in reducing fear of crime and victimization and increasing confidence in the police – there must be considerable uncertainty as to whether many of the things people want the police to do are within its power to address. The resonance with Reiner's (2007) recent exploration of the political-economic roots of much crime and disorder is strong – the causes of the issues important to the public run much deeper than a police response in any normal sense can reach.

The 'broken windows' thesis (Wilson and Kelling 1982), and associated policing practices, would depart from this latter point in suggesting that dealing with minor incivilities and local disorder can have some effect on the incidence of crime – in short, it is not all about root causes (Sousa and Kelling 2006). Evidence from the two studies reported above appears to suggest public support for this idea: opinions of the police may be based primarily on the prevalence of such problems and implicitly on the police's ability to deal with them. But such a suggestion would probably be mistaken. Recall that the bulk of the effects described above can be attributed to *perceptions* of disorder; the issue of 'broken windows', in policy terms at least, is aimed at addressing *real* disorder and decay. If it is broader concerns about decline in society which drive perceptions of disorder and through them confidence in the police, such root causes of confidence are indeed likely to be deeper than fixing broken windows (Kelling and Coles 1996) can address, no matter what effect such policies may have on crime itself (Harcourt 2001; Xu, Fielder and Flaming 2005).

Finally, it is notable that the analysis presented here replicates results from more recent waves of the BCS in suggesting that confidence is higher among those from Black and Asian ethnic groups than it is in the majority White population.[10] Such findings seem counterintuitive in light of the ideas positioning the police as representative of nation, state and belonging. It might be assumed that the ethnic majority feels more affiliation to structures which it, after all, dominates. However, analysis of data from 20 years of the BCS (Bradford 2008) has shown that the current position is primarily a result of falls in trust and confidence among Whites relative to other groups. It may be

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that association of the police with a present experienced as fragmented and troubled, with the concomitant stresses on confidence this implies, is particularly keenly felt among those who cling most firmly to the other vision of policing, that which conjures up images of a more cohesive national past and which is linked to a story of decline. Such people seem likely to be over-represented in the White group compared with others, although further work would be needed to properly substantiate this claim.

8. Conclusions

What – in this final analysis – are the implications of this paper for public policy? With high profile initiatives of 'reassurance' policing currently taking place across England and Wales – initiatives that are intended 'to impact upon the linked problems of fear of crime and lack of public support' (Sharp 2005: 456) – there is a pressing need to systematically assess what drives public confidence in policing. It is sometimes said that fear of crime erodes faith in the criminal justice system. The public has an exaggerated and irrational sense of the crime problem, meaning the police do not get the credit they deserve when crime rates fall, as they have done over the past decade and more. If this idea is correct, to improve public support the police might look to dampen down excessive fears and correct inaccurate beliefs about crime, perhaps by educating the public or by publicizing police successes. Yet this study suggests that narrow attempts to reduce fear and communicate the reality of crime will not improve public confidence. Rather, people look to the police to defend everyday civility, norms and social controls, and when these are seen to be under threat, individuals lose faith in the effectiveness of their local police force. Disorder, cohesion and moral consensus – these are the things that people *feel*. Individuals look to the police to defend group cohesion and values (Sunshine and Tyler 2003b; Jackson and Sunshine 2007); formal agents of social control are called upon when informal processes are seen to be failing (cf. Hawden's (2008) discussion of social capital and public confidence in the police).

This study supports current policing strategies that look to engage more and more with the day-to-day social order of civil public space and civil society. In particular, it backs the signal crimes perspective underpinning reassurance policing strategies being carried out across England and Wales (Innes 2004b; Millie and Herrington 2005; Herrington and Millie 2006). A reassurance strategy seeks to increase the visibility, accessibility and familiarity of the police (Innes 2004a). It looks to identify those (symbolic) events that the public identify as troubling – those which signal a weak social order – and deal with them. In this way, the police hope to improve fear of crime and public confidence in policing, rendering the police as a more visible

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symbol of social control (see Manning 1997, 2003). The findings here support reassurance policing strategies: both fear of crime and public confidence in policing flow from day-to-day signs of social cohesion and control. Moreover, narrow attempts to reduce public concerns over safety will not improve public confidence; programmes to address lay concerns about disorder and informal social control are much more likely to secure support for the police (Bridenball and Jesilow 2008; Innes 2004a, 2004b). The public appear to demand what Loader (2006) calls 'ambient policing,' as described in a series of articles by Innes (which prefer the labels 'reassurance policing' and 'signal crimes').

If some crimes are signals not only of criminality, but also provide messages about a broader set of social problems, it is possible that these are driving perceptions of disorder and lack of informal social control and in turn affecting confidence in the police. The signal crimes approach suggests that it should be possible to identify these crimes and provide a policing response to them, resulting in increased reassurance, decreased fear of crime and other benefits. However it should be noted that the model developed here holds perceptions of disorder and community cohesion (and mediated through these 'real' community characteristics, such as crime rates) to be driving fear of crime, not the other way round. A much wider set of issues than just signal crimes appears to be generating generalized fear of crime. Even if these important crimes were dealt with adequately the much greater range of social issues they signal, present in people's lives in many other ways, will still have an impact.

In the public mind, then, notions of 'crime' and 'policing' seem to stand for the form and structure of society, for things that threaten or protect values and morals, and for how successfully society regulates itself. Such representations range far beyond generally accepted notions of what 'crime' is or who should deal with it. Disorders and incivilities as much as crimes *per se* communicate the failure of the community to self-regulate. Experiences of these arouse passions – they strike at the norms and values of the group, attack community cohesion, and reveal inadequate social controls. The police, representatives of both community (nation) and state, become associated with, and blamed for, these failures (Reiner 2000; see also Smith 2007). This may be why crime and policing are so salient in the public mind: they reveal, specifically, the condition of the community and, generally, the state of society. When people think about crime and policing they think about social control and cohesion, about the norms, morals and values of certain groups, and the state of social order: concerns about crime and police effectiveness may thus serve as a lay seismograph of social cohesion and moral consensus.

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Appendices

Appendix Table I: *Ordinal latent trait modeling of key constructs in study one*

Construct and indicators	Factor loadings
Worry about crime	
In the past year, how often (if at all) have you worried about being mugged and robbed?	0.42
In the past year, how often (if at all) have you worried about being burgled?	0.61
In the past year, how often (if at all) have you worried about having your car stolen?	0.57
Incivilities	
How much of a problem is vandalism, graffiti etc?	0.79
How much of a problem are teenagers hanging around?	0.66
How much of a problem is rubbish or litter?	0.66
How much of a problem are people being drunk or rowdy?	0.65
Social cohesion	
This area is a close tight-knit community	0.47
How many people do you trust in your local area?	0.75
How many people do you know in your local area?	0.71
Informal social control	
If youths cause trouble, people will tell them off	0.42
How likely is lost wallet to be returned without anything missing?	0.53
Interviewer assessment of disorder	
In the immediate area, how common is litter/rubbish?	0.83
In the immediate area, how common is vandalism, graffiti, or damage to properties?	0.80
In the immediate area, how common are houses in poor condition/run down?	0.80

Source: Sub-sample D2 of the 03/04 British Crime Survey.
Notes: Latent Gold 4.0 and full information maximum likelihood estimation was used; a one-factor latent trait model was estimated separately for each latent construct; factor loadings are standardized coefficients estimated from each of the five separate models.

Appendix Table II: *Standardized regression coefficients for indicators for latent variables in study two*

Latent variable and indicators	Standardized regression coefficients
Worry about crime	
How worried are you about being attacked by strangers?	0.84
How worried are you about being mugged?	0.72
How worried are you about being insulted or pestered by anybody in the street or any other public space?	0.80
How worried are you about having you home broken into and something stolen?	0.62
Interviewer ratings of disorder around respondents home and immediate area	
How common is litter/rubbish?	0.81
How common is vandalism, graffiti or damage to property?	0.87
How common are houses in poor condition/run down?	0.85
Perception of neighbourhood informal social control	
If I sensed trouble whilst in this area, I could 'raise' attention from people who live here for help	0.76
The people who live here can be relied upon to call the police if someone is acting suspiciously	0.80
If any of the children or young people around here are causing trouble, local people will tell them off	0.64

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Appendix Table II: *Continued*

Latent variable and indicators	Standardized regression coefficients
Perception of neighbourhood disorder	
Are noisy and/or nuisance neighbours a problem in this area?	0.53
Is noisy/rowdy/inconsiderate behaviour in the street a problem in this area?	0.68
Are teenagers hanging around in the street a problem in this area?	0.63
Is drinking in the street a problem in this area?	0.59
Attitudes toward law and order	
Young people today don't have enough respect for traditional values	0.55
People who break the law should be given stiffer sentences	0.67
Schools should teach children to obey authority	0.72
Concerns about long term social change	
Sense of belonging to the local community	0.81
Sense of trust amongst people who live here	0.88
Sense of right and wrong amongst people who live here	0.84
Police effectiveness	
Respond to emergencies promptly	0.52
Provide a visible patrolling presence	0.57
Tackle gun crime	0.64
Support victims and witnesses	0.70
Tackle dangerous driving	0.68
Deal with teenagers hanging around	0.77
Deal with people being drunk or rowdy	0.77

Sources: Metropolitan Police Safer Neighbourhoods Survey 2006/07.
Notes: Standardized regression coefficients derived from the SEM model shown in Figure II.

Notes

1. There has been a small number of notable North American studies that capture the various relationships between fear of crime, concerns about neighbourhood disorder, and public confidence in policing. Cao, Frank and Cullen (1996) drew on data from a postal survey of Cincinnati residents to show that relatively strong public concerns about neighbourhood disorder (and separately) informal social control were associated with relatively low levels of confidence in police effectiveness and engagement with the community. Importantly for the current study, fear of crime was a statistically significant predictor of public confidence, before neighbourhood concerns about disorder and collective efficacy were included in the regression model, but not after. Reisig and Parks (2000) analysed data from telephone interviews of residents of Indianopolis (Indiana) and St. Petersburg (Florida) to assess the relative contribution of four factors in explaining levels of confidence in the police: encounters with the police; perceived neighbourhood conditions (crime levels, safety on the streets walking alone after dark, disorder, and general satisfaction with the area as a place to live); and actual neighbourhood conditions (census measures of concentrated disadvantage, and police measures of homicide rates). They found that perceptions of neighbourhood conditions (all were statistically significant net of the effect of covariates), encounters with the police (negatively-received encounters had the biggest effect) and concentrated disadvantage (but not homicide levels) all predicted levels of confidence. Indeed public perceptions of their neighbourhood were stronger predictors of public confidence in

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the police than (a) neighbourhood levels of poverty and homicide and (b) encounters with the police – further evidence that the public hold 'the police accountable for the quality of life in the neighbourhood' (Reisig and Parks 2000: 610). A third study found that Canadians tended to be less satisfied with their local police when they perceived high levels of disorder around them (Sprott and Doob 2008); however, perceptions of personal safety was also a statistically significant predictor of confidence, even holding constant public concerns about disorder.

2. Moreover, people who identified with the morals and values the police represent were more likely to express confidence in police activities. Drawing on social identity theory from social psychology, the argument put forward was that people look to the police not just to defend group values and norms, but also to exemplify them, because the police are authorities of the group. Social identity theory predicts that people judge the authority of the group by the extent to which that authority is a prototypical representative of the group, and this is especially so for people who strongly identify with the group. This was found to be the case with the police (Jackson and Sunshine 2007). One way that the police communicated the values they espoused was through the dignity and fairness with which they were seen to treat people (e.g. Sunshine and Tyler 2003b; Tyler and Huo 2002).

3. In the BCS data, deprivation is compiled at the Electoral Ward level. The 2004 IMD measures seven dimensions of deprivation: income, employment, health, education, barriers to housing and services, crime and the quality of the living environment. The crime dimension combines police recorded crime statistics for the time period April 2002–March 2003 for burglary (covering 4 recorded crime offence types), theft (covering 5 types), criminal damage (covering 10 types) and violence (covering 14 types). The quality of the living environment dimension covers measures of the condition of social and private housing, the number of houses without central heating, air quality, and road traffic accidents (with all data centred around 2001).

4. The British Crime Survey includes a complex sampling design with weights. This affects our analysis in two ways: first we need to weight to make up for unequal sampling probabilities; and second we need to be careful about any possible effect of design effects on the size of standard errors. We dealt with former by including as covariates in the regression modeling a variable that captures the type of area in which respondents live (inner-city, urban or rural) and a variable that measures household size (number of adults in the house). Holding constant these two factors allows us to weight for unequal address selection probabilities across Police Force Areas, for unequal individual selection probabilities, and for inner-city non-response. The latter issue (design effects) means that standard errors are underestimated due to the complex sampling design. To correct for this we would require primary sampling unit identifies. However the Home Office does not release these data for reasons of anonymity. Moreover the 2003/04 BCS Technical Report does not report design effects for the relevant variables, which would allow us to correct this manually.

5. Measures of the frequency of worry were used (for discussion see Gray, Jackson and Farrall 2008; Farrall, Jackson and Gray 2009).

6. A three-stage sample selection process was employed within each ward, entailing: random probability sampling of household addresses; the random selection of a dwelling unit in cases where a single address included more than one unit; and the random selection of an adult to be targeted for interview in cases where a household contained more than one adult.

7. One of the limitations of traditional regression modelling is that one estimates the statistical effects of the explanatory variables on the response variable – when the explanatory variable increases by one unit

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of membership we predict a particular change in the response variable – but one implicitly assumes that a change in one explanatory variable is not related to a change in another explanatory variable. By contrast, structural equation modelling allows one to model such knock-on effects. In Study Two, the (standardized) effect decomposition was as follows. The total effect of 'concerns about long-term social change' was 0.245 (0.105 direct and 0.140 indirect through perception of disorder, informal social control, and worry about crime). The total effect of 'attitudes towards law and order' was 0.048 (all indirect through perception of disorder, social cohesion/informal social control, and worry about crime). The total effect of 'perception of neighbourhood disorder' was 0.421 (0.362 direct and 0.059 indirect through worry about crime). The total effect of 'perception of neighbourhood informal social control' was 0.076 (0.069 direct and 0.008 through worry about crime). The total effect of worry about crime was 0.069 (all direct).

8. We should add that the core finding (that public perceptions of neighbourhood disorder and social cohesion are more strongly associated with confidence in policing than fear of crime) replicate across numerous sweeps of the British Crime Survey (Jackson et al. 2009).

9. One drawback of this study is that confidence in policing was measured using a global measure. Future work should treat public confidence in policing as multi-dimensional (see Sunshine and Tyler 2003a, 2003b). In fact following Home Office consultation the 2005/2006 BCS fields an expanded set of indicators that cover numerous components, including perceptions of the fairness and integrity of the police. These items will allow a more complete assessment of public confidence in policing.

10. Of course, 'White' in this context includes people who are not White British and therefore not part of the ethnic majority in the UK. However within the White group views of White British people are likely to be very dominant.

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INTERLUDE IV

Paper four, then, suggests that support for the police is much more expressive than instrumental. Public confidence (both generally and specifically in terms of police effectiveness) is embedded to a greater extent in affective judgements about the condition of local areas, community cohesion, and concerns about long-term social change than in strictly performance-based assessments – although this is not, of course, to suggest that ideas about the 'job done' by officers are entirely unimportant. One reason for the strength of the associations observed might well be the link between police and notions of nation, state, order and stability that appears to remain prevalent in the public consciousness. This may be a demonstration of the rather unique position of the British police, especially in comparison to may of its continental neighbours. Further, it seems that the undoubted 'de-sacralisation' (Reiner 2000) of the British police over the last few decades has not diminished the continued relevance of these connections. Perhaps the multiplicity of associations which surround the police – as outlined above, nation, state, order, stability, community, among others – mean that symbolic blame or praise can flow from or attach to whichever representation is most salient to any given person or group.

Paper five below picks up this set of ideas and carries them considerably further by considering a greater range of opinions about the police. Ideas about fairness and community engagement are added to the mix, as are survey respondent's stated propensities to contact and assist the police when confronted with potentially criminal behaviour. This latter measure is taken to be at least indicative of the legitimacy of the police – it may even correspond to Beetham's (1991) expressed consent, and therefore in effect be an *aspect of* police legitimacy. By diversifying the range of opinions about the police that are modelled a more nuanced picture of the roots of public support can be developed. Expressive concerns remain predominant. But conflicting paths toward confidence and legitimacy are also revealed, suggesting that complementary psychological and social processes at once challenge and reinforce the position of the police. Perhaps most importantly in terms of the overall thesis, space for personal experience and active assessments of officer's behaviour remain, and the results outlined are entirely consistent with the procedural justice model.

PAPER FIVE

Public cooperation with the police: Social control and the reproduction of police legitimacy

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Abstract

Central to public cooperation with the police is the willingness and propensity to call upon and assist officers. These acts link both informal and formal mechanisms of social control, and constitute expressions of consent and a recognition of police legitimacy. Tyler's procedural justice model traces cooperation back through perceived legitimacy to the experience of procedural justice. Yet, we know little about the links between cooperation and broader social concerns. For example, is cooperation – as an act of social control – heightened or eroded when citizens perceive neighbourhood breakdown and social decay? Drawing on data from a survey of seven London neighbourhoods, we find that cooperation is related to high levels of public confidence in police procedural justice, heightened concerns about local disorder and moral decline, and to the feeling that local residents will intervene on behalf of the collective good. Public cooperation with the police – and therefore its legitimacy – may thus be reinforced *and* challenged by interacting perceptions of social and moral cohesion.

INTRODUCTION

To call the police, to report crime or suspicious activities, to provide information to help identify a criminal, these are acts of 'the community to regulate itself and the behaviour of residents and visitors' (Bursik and Gramsik, 2003: 15). Linking formal and informal mechanisms of social control, such acts constitute a certain kind of normative order. Actively cooperating with the police implies a recognition of its role in maintaining order and 'fighting crime', both acknowledging and bestowing police legitimacy (c.f. Beetham 1991).

Acts of cooperation are also central to the effective and equitable day-to-day functioning of the criminal justice system. Most criminal offences become known to the police because they are identified first by a member of the public. Cooperation from members of the public – whether as witnesses, jurors or in other roles – is required throughout the criminal justice process. An absence of cooperation not only impairs the efficiency of the police and other criminal justice agencies, it also erodes the fairness of their operations (Goudriaan et al., 2006). If crimes are less likely to be reported by people living in certain areas, then police resources will be allocated in ways which do not reflect the 'true' distribution of crime, favouring those areas where people are more likely to report (even if the incidence of crime is lower).

If public cooperation with the police is important in the reproduction of social order, as well as the functioning, effectiveness and fairness of the justice system, we are wise to understand the extent, distribution and explanation of such cooperation. The work of Tyler and colleagues (Tyler, 1990; 2004; 2006; Tyler and Blader, 2000; Tyler and Huo, 2002) has consistently demonstrated strong links between the procedural fairness of the police, legitimacy, and the readiness of the public to support the police. If people believe officers to be fair, competent and honest they are also likely to see the police as legitimate. Legitimacy then leads citizens to a feeling that it is right and proper to offer cooperation and assistance.

In this paper we seek to make three contributions to the literature on public confidence and police legitimacy. First, we examine the link between trust in the police and cooperation as it exists in a UK context, aiming to work towards an international literature on procedural justice issues within which important comparative questions can be answered. The vast majority of research in this area related to the US, and it is important to assess the situation, in terms of differences *and* similarities, pertaining in other countries. Second, we consider the interplay between perceptions of neighbourhood breakdown,

stability and public cooperation. Does a sense of neighbourhood instability heighten the propensity to call upon and assist the police, or does it erode the inferred legitimacy of the police as a form of social control? Third, we examine the link between more general concerns about social and moral decline and individual's readiness to assist the police. Do citizens look to the police as symbols and bastions of moral authority, turning to them especially when moral consensus is seen to be under threat? Along the way, we draw upon recent British research into public confidence in policing (Jackson & Bradford, 2009; Jackson & Sunshine, 2007) that suggests that people judge the police partly on the basis of the strength of the informal social control mechanisms that regulate most potential deviance. When regulation is strong, the police will seem effective (for they are not needed). But when dominant values are seen to be under threat, then the police may be seen as remote, unengaged, no longer a defender/symbol of community norms and values (Reiner, 2000). Members of the community may therefore look to the police as 'moral guardians' of social stability and order; and opinions of police are likely bound up with assessments of the condition of that order.

This study therefore explores the links between social concerns, cooperation and public confidence in policing. We focus on lay assessments of neighbourhood breakdown and the loss of moral authority in society (Sampson and Bartusch, 1998; Silver and Miller, 2004; Warner, 2007) to draw out a complex set of associations between people's orientations, concerns and propensities to cooperate with the police. Considering cooperation to be an act that links informal and formal social control mechanisms and a (re)affirmation of police legitimacy, we argue that public alignment with the moral value of the rule of law – and subsequent intentions to cooperate by calling the police to report crime – is strengthened by police activities which communicate to individuals shared group membership and status. Yet levels of cooperation may also be related to both perceived threats to social order (neighbourhood breakdown and instability, worry about crime, a threatened moral structure) and levels of social cohesion and collective efficacy. We argue, overall, that cooperation with the police is influenced not only by assessments of the police organisation (its procedural fairness, effectiveness and so forth), but is also embedded in much wider and deeper concerns about the nature and vectors of moral and social change. The analysis presented here thus positions the police at the heart of a web of feelings, emotions and social relations that simultaneously challenges and helps reproduce its legitimacy.

WHY DO PEOPLE CALL THE POLICE – AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO DO SO?

Individuals make contact with the police for many reasons, from the most serious life-or-death situation to the most mundane everyday circumstance. Our focus in this paper is on calls made to the police to report crimes or anti-social behaviour, as well as offers to assist the police through the provision of information. These are types of cooperation that might not involve matters of personal concern to those involved, but they are nonetheless indicative of the application of informal social control. Being an active recognition of the propriety of the police remit over matters of crime and disorder, they are also evocative of police legitimacy.

CALLING THE POLICE AS AN ACT OF INFORMAL SOCIAL CONTROL

According to Bursik and Gramsik (1993; see also Warner, 2007), there are three types of 'informal' social control, or three levels of operation for the everyday social regulation and enforcement of norms in which almost all people are involved to some extent or at some time. First, there is the private social control that is embedded in the relationships between family and close friends. Second, there is parochial social control, exerted by more diffuse networks of people usually imagined to be operating within a geographically and/or socially bounded area. Third, there is indirect informal social control (or what Warner (ibid: 101) calls public control), bound up in the ability of individuals and social networks to "secure public goods and services that are allocated by agencies located outside the area" (Bursik and Gramsik, 1993: 17; quoted in Warner, 2007: 101).

Carr (2003) usefully blurs the line between parochial and public control. While it has traditionally been the case that low levels of social cohesion and high levels of subjective disorder are expected to weaken parochial social control (people are less willing to get involved if they do not feel that others around them share similar concerns and would support them), this does not necessarily mean that informal social control is absent. The 'new parochialism' describes situations in which individuals, although perhaps not willing to 'have a go' themselves, are more than willing to call on and cooperate with agents of formal social control – and not simply by delegating problems to them. Instead, there exists "a partnership between parochial and public spheres" (ibid: 1252) wherein these different types of control are not separate from each other but intimately linked. A vital component of the new parochialism is that this type of social control is initiated at the personal level and implemented at the public – or formal – level.

Social control mechanisms are often measured at the community level, and their relative strengths or weaknesses are related to factors such as the social composition of an area, population stability, and relationships with the police (Carr, 2003; Sampson and Bartusch, 1998; Sampson et al., 1997; Wells et al., 2006). These concerns seem most apposite when considering parochial social control in Bursik and Gramsik's sense, i.e. the direct involvement of only loosely related people in regulating behaviour, classically of teenagers, in their local area.

However, our focus in this paper is at the individual level. We consider, in the current study, the factors that influence decisions of citizens to call upon and assist the police, to invoke the police as agents of formal social control. Such acts of *in*formal social control are responses to "conduct regarded as undesirable from a normative viewpoint, that is ... *conduct which ought not to occur*" (Black, 1993: 22, emphasis added; see also Bursik and Gramsik, 1993: 14). Social control and reactions to deviancy are intimately bound up with the function of the police as envisaged by Bittner (1990), we reason, in that all address the central problem posed by events or behaviours which *ought not* to be happening. The extent of people's willingness to contact and cooperate with the police is likely to be related to their normative assessments of the area in which they live and those they share it with – what ought or ought not to occur, what should be done about deviancy, whether it is worth getting involved. It will also be bound up with their opinions of the police itself, perhaps most importantly with the legitimacy they grant to it.

COOPERATION AND POLICE LEGITIMACY

Definitions of legitimacy vary widely, but a common theme is that it confers the right to command and promotes the duty to obey (Tyler, 1990; Weber, 1978). Theorists from Weber onwards have viewed legitimacy as a vital component of social institutions, both in the long run for their very survival, and on a day to day basis as individuals defer to, and cooperate with, legitimate authorities because they feel it is right to do so (Sunshine and Tyler, 2003a; 2003b).

For Sunshine & Tyler (2003) legitimacy is:

> "a property of an authority or institution that leads people to feel that authority or institution is entitled to be deferred to and obeyed. It represents an 'acceptance by people of the need to bring their behaviour into line with the dictates of an external authority'." (Sunshine and Tyler 2003: 556; quoting Tyler 1990: 25)

On this account police legitimacy resides primarily in the perceived obligation to obey the commands of officers. A more nuanced account of legitimacy can be found in the work of David Beetham (1991), who insists that legitimacy is not only a property of an authority but is also constituted by normative assessments of that authority by those it governs and, crucially, by their actions. Those granting legitimacy do so on the basis that it is an expression of common shared values, and they act in ways congruent with the recognition of such. Beetham outlines three dimensions of legitimacy, each of which must be fulfilled for an authority to be considered legitimate. First is conformity to a set of rules. Second is the justifiability of these rules in terms of shared beliefs. Third is the expressed consent of those governed or otherwise affected by the authority.[11] Applied to the police, we might conceive of legitimacy as present in the extent to which members of the public see the exercise of police power adhering to the rules laid down for its use; in the justification of those rules by those subject to police authority (that they correspond with and express common shared values); and in acts of public deference to police officers, offers of assistance, and acceptance (even encouragement) of a police presence at specific moments. So, while Tyler treats cooperation as an outcome of legitimacy, a broader view treats moments of cooperation as being themselves *acts of legitimation*. Cooperation reveals the expressed consent of the public, and may be just as important an aspect of legitimacy as the duty to obey police directives.

Legitimacy may not, then, be simply the right to be recognised as the appropriate institution with authority over a particular aspect of social life (Habermas, 1979), or the "largely unquestioned acceptance of authority" (Barker, 1990: 33), although both are important. It is also actualised or instantiated in specific acts of deference, compliance, or cooperation which demonstrate recognition of the right of the police to exist and intervene in social life. Calling upon or assisting the police are not simply acts which flow from its legitimacy – they in part constitute that legitimacy. Such acts place obligations on both officer and citizen which will be expressive of underlying moral values and beliefs; being recognisant of the nature of the relationship between the police and policed, they will serve to define and delimit the role, rights and duties of both parties during the encounters they generate. In sum:

[11] Legitimacy can be seen as primarily rooted in moral identification 'in the eye of the beholder', residing in the beliefs of those subject to an authority. On the other hand it can be viewed in terms of a normative justifiability, provided by organisational adherence to established legal and ethical frameworks and assessed by external or objective criteria. We do not seek to address this distinction here – suffice to say that in the context of British policing elements of both conceptualisations may be important among the public at large.

> "...what is important for legitimacy is evidence of consent expressed through *actions* which are understood as demonstrating consent within the conventions of the particular society ...these actions ... confer legitimacy; they contribute to making power legitimate. They do this both through the public demonstration of people's consent to the power relationship, and through the resulting obligations that derive from them on the part of both dominant and subordinate alike. They possess simultaneously a symbolic and a normative force." (Beetham, 1991: 12, emphasis in original)

LEGITIMACY AND PROCEDURAL JUSTICE

Notwithstanding Beetham's more inclusive definition, a good proportion of the empirical evidence on public cooperation with the police and courts links it to procedural justice via the intervening mechanism a notion of legitimacy centred on the obligation to obey (Tyler, 1990; 2004; 2006; Tyler and Blader, 2000; Tyler and Huo, 2002). While the idea of procedural justice is firmly rooted in US research, the basic thrust of the model is beginning to find purchase outside of the US (Bradford, 2009; Bradford et al., 2009; Hinds and Murphy, 2007; Tankebe, 2008; Wells, 2008). Although a full explication of the model in a UK context has not yet been forthcoming, in the US literature the experience of procedurally just and fair treatment at the hands of authorities such as the police is linked not only to satisfaction with the decisions reached and with the decision-maker, but also with increased propensities to offer assistance in the future. In the case of legal authorities, procedural fairness is also linked with greater compliance with both the law abstractly defined and with concrete instructions emanating from the authority. On this account, procedural fairness enhances legitimacy, which in turn *leads to* cooperation.

These effects are held to emerge partly because the experience of procedural fairness fosters in people feelings of motive-based trust in, and shared group membership with, the authority concerned – the idea that both it and they are 'on the same side.' It is through these mechanisms that procedural fairness enhances the authority's legitimacy, which then boosts compliance with the law and encourages self-regulation. If the police are perceived to be illegitimate, not only will cooperation decline, people will also be less likely to obey the law. This might encourage or force authorities to take a more punitive and/or aggressive stance – which will likely be perceived as procedurally unfair by members of the public, leading to a downward spiral of increasing distance and antagonism between police and public (see for example Brunson, 2007; Carr et al., 2007; Loader, 1996; McAra and McVie, 2005).

The idea of shared group membership is central to the procedural justice model (Tyler, 1990; Tyler and Blader, 2000). By treating people justly and equitably, police action communicates to citizens that they are valued members of the social group that the police represent (which can be conceptualised as the nation, state, or community – Jackson and Bradford, 2009). Conversely, unfair treatment communicates division, social denigration and exclusion, thus fostering an 'us and them' situation. This idea echoes Anglo-centric accounts of policing which have painted the English police as representatives of law and order, the nation-state, respectability, and even a certain form of Englishness (Girling et al., 2000; Loader, 2006; Reiner, 2000; Smith, 2007; Waddington, 1999). Such a perspective positions the police as exactly the kind of 'proto-typical group representatives' (Jackson and Sunshine, 2007; Sunshine and Tyler, 2003b) envisaged by the procedural justice model. The police become symbols of the dominant social order with whom many people feel a direct relationship, a sense of ownership and perhaps of deference.

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CONCERNS

In British criminology, Reiner (2000), Loader (2006) and others have developed distinctive accounts of what the police are and represent. But what does membership of the social groups implied by such work entail? What opinions, outlooks or 'structures of feeling' (Williams, 1964; see Loader and Mulcahy, 2003) are implicated by adherence to the police as representative of, for example, a stable, cohesive national past (Girling et al., 2000; Reiner, 2000)? And what do such public imaginaries of the police imply for cooperation and, indeed, legitimacy?

One way to conceptualise the position of the police in British society is to think not about crime (it seems that concerns about crime *per se* have only a tangential connection with assessments of the police – Jackson et al. 2009) but about some of the deeper social concerns which may underlie people's 'crime talk' (Sasson 1995). A growing body of work (for example Girling *et al.*, 2000; Loader & Mulcahy, 2003) stresses that when people think about the police and their 'crime-fighting' activities, they also think about what 'crime' stands for (erosion of norms and social ties that underpin group life) and what 'policing' stands for (organized defence of the norms and social ties). Individuals who are concerned about long-term social change, who perceive a modern world in long term moral and social decline, who buy into a 'community lost' narrative, may blame the police as representatives of the order (perhaps, the nation state or 'society') which allows these things to happen (Jackson and Bradford, 2009). Assessments of cohesion, social control and civility that reflect concerns about the breakdown and fragmentation of society may thus decrease

confidence in police effectiveness, fairness and group engagement (Jackson & Sunshine, 2007), and therefore, perhaps, police legitimacy.

In essence the idea is that citizens hold accountable group authorities that are perceived to let the norms, values and standards of public behaviour to erode 'on their watch'. Furthermore, concerns about cohesion, disorder and collective efficacy are also held to be strongly linked to informal social control (Carr, 2003; Sampson and Bartusch, 1998; Sampson et al., 1997; Warner, 2003, 2007; Wells et al., 2006), with lower levels of social cohesion and collective efficacy linked to lower propensities to engage in informal social control. One hypothesis is therefore that concerns about neighbourhood disorder and social cohesion are associated with both low confidence in the police and with low cooperation.

However, contradictory processes may be at work. People who perceive social and moral order to be in decline, who think the established order is under threat, may cleave more strongly to the police as representatives of that order. Those who think that many things are happening which ought not to be may be more ready to invoke the police to correct what they see to be a deteriorating state of affairs. And, through doing so, they would be reproducing police legitimacy. While there is much in the literature to support this idea, in some cases at least (Girling *et al.*, 2000; Loader and Mulcahy, 2003), there has so far been little empirical work to examine possible mechanisms for such a link, especially in light of the potentially countervailing processes outlined above. The current paper represents a first step toward doing so.

To summarise, exactly those things which might affect cooperation with the police are those which may influence propensities toward involvement in informal social control. Indeed, these are in many ways two sides of the same coin (on one level the association is almost trivial), and it is important not to get carried away with the argument. Cooperation with the police may almost inevitably be participation of some type in social control. But people will have many other reasons for deciding to contact the police than a wish, conscious or unconscious, to engage in such behaviour (sheer habit may be one). Furthermore, decisions against doing so may rest on more mundane or immediate reasons than those addressed here – fear of reprisal, apathy, and identification with those involved in 'disorderly' behaviour may all be important factors. Nevertheless it is at least plausible that there is a deeper, more affective link between engagement in social control and cooperation with the police. If the police are indeed 'proto-typical group representatives', and informal social control is the exercise of social or other mechanisms to protect the integrity or internal order of the group, then cooperation with the police must rest in part on

ideas that the individual involved recognise and value the group they share with the police – that it is *worth* supporting – and/or that it is under threat in some way.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS/HYPOTHESES

In this paper we examine the willingness of individuals to contact, cooperate with and support the police. We assume such support is indicative of the exercise of informal social control in a sense close to Carr's (2003) new parochialism. Cooperation, we reason, is an act of social control initiated at the informal or parochial level but implemented at the formal or public level, and it is indicative of the legitimacy of the police because it is an act of expressed consent. Cooperation is more than a readiness to offer assistance, and it comprises an active recognition of the role and abilities of the police.

Support understood in these terms may have a number of antecedents. The first area of interest is public confidence in police fairness and group engagement, which we take to be broadly representative of procedural justice concerns, and which are therefore linked to trust and shared group membership. Second, opinions about police effectiveness more narrowly defined should not be forgotten. These may be an important predictor of intention to cooperate, being an assessment of the 'job done' by the police organisation across its wide range of tasks. Perhaps there is little point in helping an institution that does not seem efficacious. Third, ideas about the state and direction of society may be associated with cooperation (perhaps, as indicated above, mediated by public confidence in police effectiveness, fairness and group engagement), whether they be couched in terms or moral decline, increasing disorder, or, finally, concerns about social cohesion or collective efficacy.

More specifically, we test four hypotheses:

(i) Those who perceive the police to be procedurally just and fair will be more likely to offer their support.

(ii) A more favourable view of police effectiveness will be associated with a greater propensity to support.

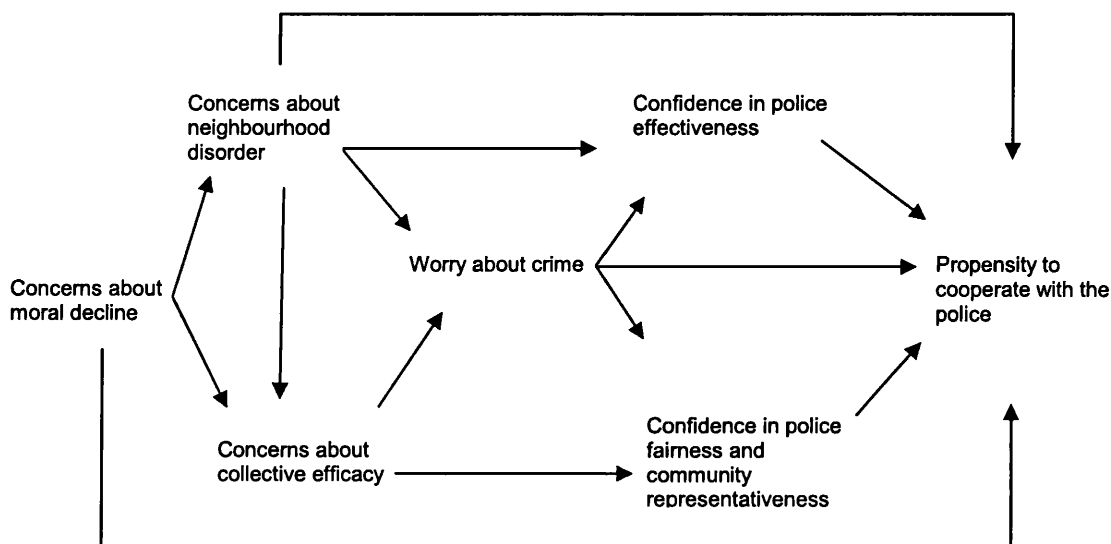
(iii) Those who perceive a situation of moral decline will similarly profess a greater propensity to assist the police. Holding other concerns constant it seems most likely in the British context that greater perceived threat to the general social order will be linked to a greater propensity to cooperate with the police.

(iv) Perceptions of the local area, about disorder, social cohesion, and collective efficacy, will equally be associated with differences in willingness to assist the police. This is a two-way hypothesis. Perceptions of disorder and a decline in social cohesion may be linked with lower propensities to support the police because the police are judged to be responsible in some sense for these and therefore lose legitimacy. On the other hand, in as much as perceptions of disorder and of declining cohesion and efficacy are expressive of the same underlying concerns as 'moral decline' they could be associated with a *greater* likelihood to cooperate.

Overall, we consider there to be a complex web of factors to be related to people's willingness to contact and cooperate with the police (see Figure 1). While this may appear unsatisfactory in terms of parsimony and conceptual elegance, it seems probable that the structure of public orientations toward the police, and of the exercise of informal social control, is complex. A number of potential explanatory variables needs to be assessed, or we run the risk of missing important roots or paths of support (and indeed challenges to it). Figure 1 is of course a purely stylistic way of presenting the suggested relationships and of ordering the observational data (see Figure 2 below), and in reality things are likely to be considerably more complicated. In particular both model and reality will be reciprocal, with, for example, levels of trust in the police reflecting back over time onto ideas about crime and disorder (Skogan 2009).

Figure 1

Conceptual map



DATA AND METHODS

The 2008 'Safer Neighbourhoods Survey' (SNS) was commissioned by the London Metropolitan Police Service, with respondents drawn from a random sample representative of residents (aged 16 and over) of seven electoral wards in London. A total of 2,836 face-to-face interviews were carried out between the 1st of May and the 31st of July 2008, with topics covering public confidence in the police, perceptions of crime and disorder, attitudes towards and contact with the police, victimization, and the fear of crime.

In order to represent the key sets of public opinions required in the study, we estimated a range of latent variables using ordinal latent trait modelling in the software package Latent Gold (version 4) for use in regression analysis. We also utilised structural equation modelling of identical latent constructs using categorical indicators in MPlus 5.2 (see below). Component indicators and respective factor loadings from the ordinal latent trait models are shown in Table 1. Factor loadings are high in every case and, furthermore, fit statistics from structural equation modelling using the same latent constructs and indicators were robust (see Figure 2). These factors can be taken as some indication that the scales utilised have good measurement properties.[12]

Some discussion of the key measures is in order. Firstly, we began by measuring confidence in police fairness (procedural justice) and confidence in police engagement with the community separately (Bradford et al., 2009; Jackson et al., 2009; Jackson and Bradford, 2009). Yet, while these can be seen as conceptually distinct ideas – and are treated as such in the work of Tyler and others – the measures were so highly correlated there was little option other than to treat them as one (or else suffer multicollinearity problems). This in itself is an interesting finding: it suggests that people living in London draw very little distinction between, on the one hand, the fairness with which officers wield their authority, and, on the other, the extent to which the police understand and represent citizens at the group level.

[12] While it is generally accepted that formal statistical tests of ordinal latent trait models are too sensitive to sample size to be of practical use, there is as yet little agreement as to the relevance of approximate fit statistics of the type often used in confirmatory factor analysis.

Table 1
Ordinal latent trait models: constructs and indicators

	Factor loadings
Cooperation with the police: How likely would you be to do the following things?	
Call the police to report a crime occurring in your neighbourhood?	0.78
Help the police to find someone suspected of committing a crime by providing them with informat	0.83
Report dangerous or suspicious activities in your neighbourhood to the police?	0.82
Community cohesion/collective efficacy	
People in this neighbourhood can be trusted	0.70
People act with courtesy to each other in public space in this area	0.69
You can see from the public space here that people take pride in their environment	0.70
Local people and authorities have control over the public space in this area	0.61
If I sensed trouble whilst in this area, I could get help from people who live here	0.63
The people who live here can be relied upon to call the police if someone is acting suspiciously	0.59
Perception of crime problem: Are these things a problem in this area?	
Burglary	0.64
Mugging, by this I mean being robbed on the street by a person using violence or the threat of vic	0.75
Non violent theft, for instance, pick pocketing/bag snatch	0.72
Car crime – stealing cars or from cars	0.62
Rape/other sexual assault	0.56
Racially motivated attacks/ harassment	0.56
Knife crime – people carrying or using knives to threaten or commit violence	0.42
Police effectiveness: How well do the police actually carry out these services?	
Tackle gun crime	0.80
Support victims and witnesses	0.79
Tackle dangerous driving	0.78
Tackle drug dealing and drug use	0.76
Enforcing road legislation to improve traffic flows	0.73
Responds to emergencies promptly	0.72
Provide a visible patrolling presence	0.67
Police procedural justice and community engagement	
They would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason	0.62
The police in this area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are	0.66
The police in this area are friendly and approachable	0.68
The police in this area are helpful	0.76
They are dealing with the things that matter to people in this community	0.76
They understand the issues that affect this community	0.76
They can be relied on to be there when you need them	0.71
The police in this area listen to the concerns of local people	0.75
Perceived Disorder: Are these things a problem in your area?	
Noisy and/or nuisance neighbours	0.59
Teenagers hanging around in the street	0.72
Drinking in the street	0.69
Worry about crime: How worried are you about:	
Having your home broken into and something stolen	0.58
Being mugged	0.74
Being physically attacked by strangers	0.85
Being insulted or pestered by anybody while in the street or any other public place	0.82
'Interviewer-coded disorder'	
In the immediate area, how common is litter/rubbish?	0.76
In the immediate area, how common is vandalism, graffiti or damage to properties?	0.82
In the immediate area, how common are houses in a poor condition/run down?	0.77
Perception of moral decline	
Young people today don't have enough respect for traditional values	0.60
People who break the law should be given stiffer sentences	0.65
Schools should teach children to obey authority	0.70

Source: London Metropolitan Police Safer Neighbourhoods Survey 2007/08

Similarly, while ideas about community cohesion ('people in this neighbourhood can be trusted') and informal social control ('local people and authorities have control over the public space in this area') are also conceptually distinct, answers to these individual

questions (and indeed the distinct latent constructs underlying them) were also so highly correlated that it again made little sense to treat them as separate 'things'. One interpretation of this is that when people in these seven London wards think about how cohesive their communities are they do so in a way which heavily implicates notions of the extent of informal (and formal) social control and efficacy. We can therefore treat this combined indicator as a measure of collective efficacy, since it reflects both respondent's trust in those around them and, in a closely related way, their sense that residents are willing to intervene on behalf of the public good (Sampson et al., 1997).

The measure of moral decline is central to much of what follows, and the focus here is on behaviours of young people, punitiveness, and the role of schools in teaching respect of authority. While we label this measure moral decline, this is a quite particular type of morality (indeed, one could treat these items as indicative of a particular, authoritarian ideology). It is concerned mainly with order, authority, and what should happen to those who defy it. Unlike many of the other variables included in the analysis, these measures do not access 'local' concerns; they are, implicitly at least, directed to the national level.

Finally, the slightly ambiguous nature of the 'cooperation with police' questions should be noted. The wording of the preamble – 'how likely would you be to do the following things' – is such that some respondents might interpret it to mean 'how likely is it that the following things might happen about which you might have to do something.' Answers could then be predicated, in part, on ideas about the level of crime and disorder in respondent's local areas. This does not seem to be an excessive risk, as we have measured respondent perceptions of the extent of the crime problem and also interviewer ratings of disorder, treating these latter as more 'objective' measures of conditions around respondent's homes. In the first stage of the analysis we use these as control variables to partial out (to some extent) the perceived need for the police, thus homing in on the propensity to cooperate rather than the need to cooperate. Controlling for interview-coded disorder also means that respondent's ideas about local disorder can more firmly be related to the underlying themes of moral and social change which are central to the argument.

Table 2

Correlation matrix and summaries for key explanatory variables

Rescaled continous factors extracted from ordinal latent trait models

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Cooperation (1)	1								
Police procedural justice and community engagement (2)	0.171***	1							
Police effectiveness (3)	0.123***	0.440***	1						
Crime problems (4)	-0.024	-0.255***	-0.180***	1					
Worry about crime (5)	0.117***	-0.137***	-0.117***	0.469***	1				
Community cohesion and collective efficacy concerns (6)	0.117***	0.314***	0.219***	-0.355***	-0.287***	1			
Interviewer coded disorder (7)	0.013	-0.101***	-0.134***	0.205***	0.161***	-0.301***	1		
Respondent perceived disorder (8)	0.065***	-0.194***	-0.133***	0.457***	0.360***	-0.324***	0.233***	1	
Perception of moral decline (9)	0.305***	0.025	-0.008	0.087***	0.199***	-0.072***	0.096***	0.168***	1

Summary of variables

	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Minimum	Maximum
Cooperation	7.48	2.44	-0.48	2.34	0	10
Police procedural justice and community engagement	5.23	1.73	0.22	3.64	0	10
Police effectiveness	5.46	1.69	0.26	3.36	0	10
Crime problems	3.32	2.35	0.30	2.45	0	10
Worry about crime	4.40	2.42	0.11	2.73	0	10
Community cohesion and collective efficacy concerns	5.39	1.53	-0.06	3.52	0	10
Interviewer coded disorder	3.95	2.20	-0.14	2.62	0	10
Respondent perceived disorder	3.69	2.93	0.26	2.13	0	10
Perception of moral decline	7.27	2.44	-0.30	1.95	0	10

* = $p<0.05$; ** = $p<0.01$; *** = $p<0.001$

All C factors coded such that high = more (confidence, worry, disorder, greater moral decline etc.).

Source: London Metropolitan Police Safer Neighbourhoods Survery 2007/08

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS

To aid interpretation, the factors extracted from the latent trait models were rescaled 0-10. Table 2 provides key properties of these latent variables. There were weak to moderate correlations between all the potential explanatory variables and the 'cooperation' response variable, with only two exceptions: perceptions of the local crime problem, and interviewer-coded ('objective') disorder. Strikingly, the variable most highly correlated with cooperation was perception of moral decline. Next, and some way behind in terms of predictive power, came police fairness and community engagement. It also appears that a number of the variables are skewed, particularly cooperation and perception of moral decline. In the case of the cooperation variable, for example, this skew results from the fact that over a third of respondents answered "very likely" to all three manifest indicators of cooperation, thus scoring the highest possible value on the factor representing it. Such skewness represents a potential problem for the analysis which follows, although we present below some evidence that this was not in fact the case.

RESULTS

The first task was to estimate a series of regression models in order to identify partial associations between the various explanatory variables and the stated propensity to support the police. We then used structural equation modelling to investigate more fully the multi-layered (direct and indirect) associations between the various latent variables.

STEP ONE: LINEAR REGRESSION MODELLING

A series of linear regressions were estimated (using STATA 10.0), predicting public cooperation with the police (Table 3). All models controlled for the respondents ward (a fixed-effects model). The first contained only relevant control variables – the key explanatory variables were then added in a stepwise fashion.

Looking first at model one, few of the variables included were statistically significant predictors of the conditional mean of cooperation. Perhaps the most interesting feature of the model was that satisfactory contact had a positive statistical effect, while unsatisfactory contact had no significant impact. This runs counter to the expectation of negative asymmetry in the effect of personal experience of the police (Bradford et al., 2009; Skogan, 2006). Having been a recent victim of crime was associated with less readiness to provide assistance to the police, while the two variables representing respondent's ideas about crime had different relationships with the response variable. Perceiving more crime

in the local area was associated with a *lower* propensity to cooperate with the police, suggesting that respondents were indeed answering the cooperation questions in ways amenable to the research design. A higher perceived level of crime did not mean that respondents were more likely to say they would contact and assist the police (which would imply that they answered the questions in part of the perceived likelihood of having to do so), but with less readiness to do so. Perhaps the police are 'punished' for a greater level of crime. Yet, net of ideas about the level of crime, and the other variables in model one, higher worry about crime was associated with more readiness to offer cooperation.

Model two added perceptions of moral decline. There was a strongly significant positive association between perception of moral decline and stated propensity to cooperate with the police – on average, the more a respondent perceived the general moral order to be under threat the more ready they were to say they would cooperate with and support the police. The proportion of variation in intentions to support explained jumped from 5 per cent in model one to 14 per cent in model two, underlining the importance of these concerns (at least compared with the other variables used in this analyses). Furthermore, the magnitude and significance of the coefficient representing concerns about moral decline hardly changed in models three and four when other, potentially intervening, variables were added.

Model three included perceptions of disorder and collective efficacy (which combines concerns about levels of social cohesion informal social control). Both had significant associations with the response variable, but the effects appear somewhat contradictory. Controlling for all other variables, those who perceived a greater level of disorder in their local area were slightly more likely to say they would cooperate with the police. But those who saw social cohesion and collective efficacy to be under threat (itself likely to be linked to higher perceived disorder) stated *less* intention to support. One way to interpret these findings is that people who lived in areas with lower levels of collective efficacy said they are less likely to call on and offer assistance to the police – because they felt less secure and empowered than others, or example, or because they felt the people around them would not do the same – but, at a given level of perceived cohesion, those who felt their area was more disordered were more likely to cooperate with the police (perhaps because they felt a need to reassert order in the face of local decline).[13]

[13] Further analysis supported this idea. Models identical to model 3 in Table 3 from which disorder and then collective efficacy were dropped individually, demonstrated that, without disorder, collective efficacy concerns retained a strong negative association with cooperation. However without collective efficacy, the coefficient for disorder lost its statistical significance – it was only at a given (fixed) level of collective efficacy that greater perceived disorder was associated with a greater propensity to cooperate with the police.

Table 3

Linear regression models[1] predicting stated propensities to assist the police
(High scores = greater propensity).

	Model one			Model two			Model three			Model four		
		95% CI for B			95% CI for B			95% CI for B			95% CI for B	
	B	Lower	Upper	B	Lower	Upper	B	Lower	Upper	B	Lower	Upper
(Constant)	6.839 ***	6.345	7.333	5.401 ***	4.899	5.903	3.700 ***	3.038	4.362	2.525 ***	1.814	3.236
Gender (ref: male)												
Female	-0.027	-0.210	0.157	0.006	-0.169	0.181	0.005	-0.168	0.179	-0.027	-0.199	0.144
Age (ref: 21 and under)												
22-24	0.203	-0.273	0.678	0.078	-0.376	0.532	0.069	-0.381	0.518	0.111	-0.333	0.555
25-34	0.297	-0.060	0.654	0.098	-0.244	0.439	0.084	-0.255	0.422	0.061	-0.273	0.395
34-44	0.482 **	0.120	0.844	0.265	-0.081	0.612	0.212	-0.131	0.555	0.198	-0.141	0.537
45-54	0.327	-0.060	0.714	0.085	-0.286	0.455	0.046	-0.320	0.413	0.065	-0.298	0.427
55-64	0.369	-0.036	0.774	0.042	-0.346	0.431	-0.021	-0.406	0.365	-0.048	-0.428	0.333
65-74	0.433 *	0.005	0.862	0.062	-0.350	0.473	-0.017	-0.425	0.392	-0.090	-0.493	0.314
75 and over	0.049	-0.400	0.498	-0.245	-0.675	0.185	-0.274	-0.701	0.153	-0.365	-0.787	0.058
Ethnic group (ref: White British/Irish)												
Indian	0.190	-0.215	0.595	0.042	-0.345	0.429	-0.036	-0.420	0.347	-0.050	-0.429	0.329
Pakistani/Bangladeshi	-0.322	-0.727	0.084	-0.441 *	-0.828	-0.053	-0.483 *	-0.867	-0.099	-0.507 **	-0.887	-0.128
Black Carribean	-0.211	-0.559	0.137	-0.197	-0.529	0.135	-0.199	-0.528	0.130	-0.136	-0.462	0.189
Black Afican	-0.262	-0.583	0.058	-0.333 *	-0.639	-0.027	-0.354 *	-0.657	-0.050	-0.407 **	-0.707	-0.107
Other	-0.052	-0.321	0.216	-0.062	-0.318	0.194	-0.070	-0.324	0.183	-0.125	-0.376	0.125
Car access (ref: no)												
Yes	0.281 **	0.087	0.476	0.221 *	0.035	0.406	0.235 *	0.051	0.419	0.256 **	0.075	0.438
Tenure (ref: Home owner/other)												
Social renter	-0.256 *	-0.474	-0.037	-0.402 ***	-0.612	-0.192	-0.352 ***	-0.560	-0.144	-0.371 ***	-0.576	-0.165
Private renter	-0.237	-0.519	0.046	-0.226	-0.495	0.044	-0.210	-0.477	0.057	-0.263	-0.527	0.001
Victim of crime (ref: no)												
Yes	-0.441 **	-0.756	-0.127	-0.393 *	-0.693	-0.092	-0.380 *	-0.677	-0.082	-0.365 *	-0.659	-0.071
Contact with the police (ref: none)												
Satisfactory contact	0.565 ***	0.275	0.854	0.464 ***	0.187	0.740	0.437 ***	0.163	0.711	0.344 *	0.072	0.616
Unsatisfactory contact[2]	-0.107	-0.473	0.260	-0.240	-0.591	0.111	-0.174	-0.522	0.174	0.098	-0.251	0.448
Interviewer coded disorder[3]	0.029	-0.014	0.071	0.010	-0.031	0.050	0.037	-0.005	0.078	0.043 *	0.002	0.084
Crime problems[3]	-0.112 ***	-0.157	-0.067	-0.101 ***	-0.143	-0.058	-0.086 ***	-0.132	-0.041	-0.066 **	-0.112	-0.021
Worry about crime[3]	0.168 ***	0.125	0.210	0.109 ***	0.068	0.150	0.121 ***	0.080	0.163	0.123 ***	0.082	0.164
Perception of moral decline[3]				0.303 ***	0.267	0.339	0.297 ***	0.261	0.333	0.288 ***	0.252	0.323
Disorder[3]							0.046 *	0.012	0.080	0.053 **	0.019	0.087
Social cohesion and collective efficacy concerns[3]							-0.243 ***	0.180	0.306	-0.180 ***	0.116	0.244
Confidence in police procedural justice and community engagement[3]										0.158 ***	0.102	0.215
Confidence in police effectiveness[3]										0.116 ***	0.060	0.172
R^2	0.05			0.14			0.15			0.17		
Unweighted n	2,836			2,836			2,836			2,836		

* = p<0.05; ** = p<0.01; *** = p<0.001

1 All models controlled for respondent's ward of residence.

2 includes 'neither' and 'don't know'.

3 Coded such that high = more (intention to cooperate, confidence, worry, disorder, greater moral decline etc.).

Source: London Metropolitan Police Safer Neighbourhoods Survery 2007/08

Finally, model four adds confidence in the police. Opinions of police community engagement and fairness had a strongly significant positive association with the response variable, as did ideas about police effectiveness. Those with higher opinions of the police were more likely to say they would contact and involve it. Or put it another way, trust in the police did seem to translate into cooperation (or, according to a broader perspective, into police legitimacy).

In order to address the potential problems created by the skewed nature of the 'cooperation' response variable (caused by the large number of respondents who answered 'very likely' to all three questions which measure it), a binary indicator of intention to cooperate with the police was created. Those replying 'very likely' to all three questions (n=1,127) were coded 1 with all other responses coded 0. A binary logistic regression predicting responses to this new variable was then estimated, using the same explanatory variables as model four in Table 3. The key explanatory variables in the study retained the same relationships with this new response variable, both in terms of direction of effect and statistical significance (full results are available from the lead author). This provided good evidence that the skewness of the response variable did not create problems in the linear regression analyses reported in Table 3.[14]

STEP TWO: STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING

Stage one of the analysis demonstrated that the roots of support for the police, or of expressed legitimacy and informal social control, are complex and layered. In terms of the models presented above, two key strands can be identified: confidence in the police; and perceptions of the social order which the police may represent, reflected here by concerns about moral decline, local disorder, and collective efficacy.

Stage two of the analysis utilises structural equation modelling (using MPlus 5.2, treating the indicators as categorical and using full information maximum likelihood estimation), specifying latent constructs mirroring those used previously. Such analysis allows a more nuanced investigation of the associations identified in stage one. To simplify the analysis interviewer's perceptions of local order (not significant in the regression analyses of stage one) were dropped from the analysis, and respondents concerns about crime were represented only by worry about crime.[15]

Results the structural analysis are shown in Figure 2. The model supports the idea that all the key variables in this study are associated with stated propensities to support the

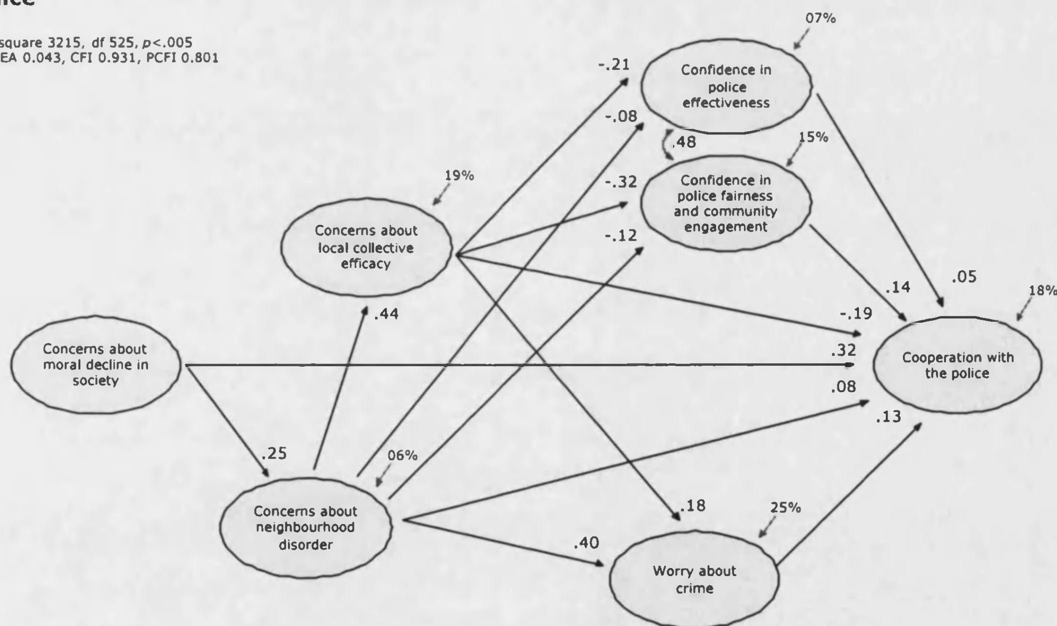
[14] Similarly, plots of residuals against fitted values generated from the models shown in Table 3 suggested no problem with heteroscedasticity.
[15] Models which included these latent constructs were entirely consistent with that shown in Figure 2.

police – opinions of police themselves, concerns about declining morality, and perceptions of disorder and collective efficacy. However the relationship between these variables is somewhat more complex than could be suggested by a linear regression model.

That said, the effect of concerns about social cohesion and collective efficacy appears straightforward. As found by Jackson and Bradford (2009), these were associated with subjective disorder of respondent's local areas – people who perceived more disorder around them also felt that collective efficacy was lower. Also as found in the earlier study, lower perceived collective efficacy and greater perceived disorder were associated with lower ratings of the police. The structural model further confirms that lower collective efficacy was associated with a reduced readiness to offer support. Those who perceived lower levels of collective efficacy not only rated the police more poorly, they also exhibited less intention to support.

Figure 2

Social concerns, confidence in policing, and cooperation with the police



Note: All paths shown were statistically significant at the 5 per cent level.

Table 4

Effect decomposition from structural equation model shown in Figure 2 (standardised coefficicents)

	Moral decline	Neighbourhood disorder	Collective efficacy	Worry about crime	Confidence in police procedural justice and community engagement	Confidence in police effectiveness
Cooperation						
Total effects	0.319	0.011	-0.249	0.132	0.141	0.051
Direct effects	0.316	0.077	-0.193	0.132	0.141	0.051
Indirect effects	0.003	-0.066	-0.056	.	.	.
Confidence in police effectiveness						
Total effects	-0.044	-0.174	-0.215	.	.	.
Direct effects	.	-0.08	-0.215	.	.	.
Indirect effects	-0.044	-0.094	.	.	.	.
Confidence in police procedural justice and community engagement						
Total effects	-0.064	-0.255	-0.318	.	.	.
Direct effects	.	-0.116	-0.318	.	.	.
Indirect effects	-0.064	-0.139	.	.	.	.

Source: London Metropolitan Police Safer Neighbourhoods Survey 2007/08

It is in the associations between ideas about general moral decline, local disorder and propensity to cooperate that more complexity is revealed. For example, the measure of moral decline retained a direct, strong *positive* link with propensity to support. But it was also linked with higher perceived disorder, and through this lower perceived collective efficacy (those who see greater moral decline experience more disorder and less collective efficacy) and less favourable opinions of the police. These factors are all *negatively* associated with propensity to cooperate. However effect decomposition (Table 4) demonstrates that, overall, moral decline retained a strong positive association with propensity to support. Perceived disorder, although it retained a significant positive direct link with propensity to support, also had indirect negative associations with cooperation. Those who saw more disorder around them felt there was less collective efficacy in their area and rated the police less favourably, things associated with less readiness to involve and cooperate with the police. Effects decomposition here demonstrates that overall higher levels of perceived disorder were associated with only slightly more readiness to cooperate (that is, the 'positive' direct effect was almost entirely offset by the 'negative' indirect effects).

Finally, in the structural model opinions of the police retained significant unique associations with intention to support, with procedural justice concerns more important than impressions of police effectiveness. This finding chimes with the predictions of Tyler *et al* (Tyler and Huo 2002; Tyler and Fagain 2008) – it seems that cooperation with the police can be enhanced by treating people fairly and with respect, and engaging with them positively, whatever the other material and social factors in play. That perceived police effectiveness also had a significant (albeit it small) association with intention to support

should underline the fact that while procedural concerns may be paramount it would be wrong to claim that people are altogether uninterested in police effectiveness.

DISCUSSION

Our assessment of public cooperation with the police has drawn together social-psychological and sociological work to provide the first empirical assessment in the UK of the associations between trust in the police and intentions to cooperate, locating individual ideas and opinions of the police within a wider social context. Psychologically, we draw on Tyler's procedural justice model (Tyler, 1990, 2006; Tyler and Blader, 2000; Tyler and Huo, 2002); while we do not in this study measure legitimacy directly as Tyler and colleagues have, we do have data on cooperation, and we have assessed the direct rather than mediated effects of trust on cooperation. Sociologically, we concentrate on concerns about community and narratives of moral decline which may shape such cooperation and which provide a broader background against which people experience, and judge, the police. The police, we argue, are both held accountable for such problems (as representatives of nation or state they are held responsible for low cohesion and moral consensus) and are invoked by the public, through calls and assistance, in order to defend and reinstall cohesion and moral consensus.

There were four main findings. First, high concerns about collective efficacy (levels of social cohesion and informal social control) were related to low levels of confidence in police effectiveness, procedural fairness and group engagement. Second, confidence was positively associated with a greater propensity to cooperate with the police. Third, there was a direct negative association between cooperation and the belief that local residents were unwilling to intervene on behalf of the collective good (net of fear of crime and concerns about the crime problem, helping to hold constant the perceived need to call the police): when informal social control processes were seen to be strong, then the police seemed to gather both public confidence and cooperation; but when these processes were seen to be weak, and when there was perhaps a greater need to involve the police in social control, then the police could draw upon only relatively low levels of public cooperation. Fourth, perceptions of high social threat (beliefs in the decline of morality and authority in society, personal concerns about local disorder, and indeed worry about crime) were associated with a stronger propensity to call upon the police as a resource of social order and control.

This study therefore supports the idea that there at least two routes toward cooperation with the police, which we assume to be both the exercise of informal social control and constitutive of police legitimacy. First, those who felt that the police are fair and engage with the community (thus demonstrating that they are group representatives who both communicate high group status to citizens and represent and defend community norms and values) were more likely to offer their support (although perceptions of police effectiveness also had a role to play). Tyler's hypothesis that trust in police fairness is more important than trust in police effectiveness in shaping legitimacy and subsequent cooperation and compliance finds much support in the data presented here.

But opinions of the police were themselves influenced by ideas and feelings running through the second path, based ultimately on the idea that the moral order of society is in decline and/or under threat. Holding opinions of the police constant those who perceived moral decline were more likely to engage in informal social control. But this second path also had a more complex relationship with opinions of the police and willingness to engage in informal social control. Higher levels of perceived disorder, and lower collective efficacy, were associated with less favourable opinions of the police and, through these, lower propensities to offer support.

Recall that perceptions of moral decline, disorder and low collective efficacy were taken here to represent concerns about the state and direction of society associated with a nostalgia, indeed yearning, for a golden age of national cohesion and unity represented in part by the figure of the uniformed 'British Bobby'. But as operationalised these perceptions referred to slightly different things (see Table 1 above). 'Moral decline' covers concern about the direction of society as a whole, being measured by questions addressing abstract 'children' or 'offenders'. By contrast, disorder and collective efficacy address specifically local concerns, with all the questions used referring to 'in this area' or 'neighbourhood'. The relative strength of these statistical effects is suggestive, with moral decline strongly associated with intentions to cooperate, and more local concerns about disorder and cohesion more strongly associated with *opinions about* the police (generally measured by questions about the 'local' police). Could it be that the association between moral decline and cooperation, or expressed consent, was so strong because this link speaks to the police institution – while local concerns attach more to the police organisation?

That perceptions of high levels of disorder, or low levels of collective efficacy, were associated with less favourable views of the police organisation corresponds with the notion that police are held to account for disorder and declining community (since the police represent a national or political order which is allowing that state of affairs to

continue – Jackson and Bradford 2009). Low levels of collective efficacy were also associated with lower levels of cooperation, or expressed consent, suggesting that the damage to public confidence which arises from perceptions of *local* community breakdown functions not just at the level of the organisation but also more deeply, affecting expressions of support which may represent and instantiate the legitimacy of the police at some more fundamental, institutional level. In contradistinction greater perceived local disorder was, net of other factors, linked to a greater readiness engage in informal social control and therefore to support the police.

These divergent patterns underline the complex and contradictory nature of public feeling about the police. If the police represent to many individuals nation, community and the established order – and to the extent that opinions about this order are expressed through a narrative of moral decline – this appeared to have a bi-directional relationship with assessments of police performance and legitimacy. A view that established order and morality was under threat at a societal level was linked a greater readiness to cooperate with the police and, therefore, to a higher level of expressed consent. But a view that the local area was in social and physical decline was associated with a more critical stance, albeit one which not inevitably negative.

The limits of the present study must be recognised. Most importantly, we are not able with the available data to predict actual acts of cooperation, but rather stated propensity to cooperate. Saying one will cooperate may be easy, and socially more acceptable, than the alternative; actually doing so may be more difficult. But while it is clearly optimal to capture both in a given study, it is still valuable to examine stated propensities. Arguably, survey responses indicating a readiness to cooperate with the police not only capture people's intentions but they may in themselves express some justification for police legitimacy, since they explicitly recognise a concrete police role in certain situations (rather than simply recording respondent's views about how well the police are 'doing' in general terms). Saying one would not contact/assist the police in the face of criminal or 'suspicious' activity communicates a contrasting, and quite definite, negative stance. A second limitation of this study is that it is cross-sectional in design. We cannot know whether the direction of the paths traced here are as formulated or whether, for example, there are feedback loops between the legitimacy granted to the police and a sense of trust in them. Future studies using panel data would be a welcome addition to work on this topic.

In sum, this study found that public cooperation with the police was higher among individuals with high confidence in police actions and motives (when the police were seen

to be fair, effective and to understand and represent community norms and values they garnered greater support from members of that community), among individuals who saw threats to their safety and to moral values in society (people saw a need for the police in terms of both future uncertain harm and the loss of broader moral authority), and among individuals who viewed a strong collective will in their neighbourhood to regulate behaviour in public space and defend civil norms and values.

CONCLUSIONS

The British police has been described as the 'Teflon service' (Reiner, 2003), recovering with seeming inevitability from whichever setbacks confront it. The web of associations described above could offer some explanation as to why this might be the case. Viewing things from one angle the police cannot win. As much as opinions seem to suffer from ideas about local disorder and decline, people who are more sanguine about wider moral decline are, net of other factors, less likely to offer their support. Perhaps being more confident about the nature of social change opens up the possibility of being more critical about police failures, real or imagined, or is associated with adherence to differently conceptualised social groupings not so strongly identified with the uniformed police. But, if we reverse the interpretation, those who perceive less moral decline are also likely to perceive less local disorder and be more confident about social cohesion, things which are associated with more favourable opinions of the police and, in the latter case, directly with a greater propensity to support. Equally, however, the 'benefits' to policing associated with the idea that the established order is under threat are offset by damage arising from the link from moral decline through concerns about disorder to lower collective efficacy.

Negatives in terms of trust in the organisation and indeed police legitimacy that arise from certain structures of feeling and thought are then offset by positives emerging from complementary processes and patterns. This is not to say that public opinions of the police are static, situated in some sort of structural functionalist, self-correcting, system which ensures the reproduction of its legitimacy. Even in terms of the limited set of variables used here it is easy to suggest that in certain situations people may not perceive moral decline as such, but increasingly feel that collective efficacy and disorder are a major problem, perhaps because they feel their local area has been abandoned by 'the powers that be'. Such people are likely to have very much less favourable views of the police, and are less likely to engage in informal social control.

However, it is clear that these apparently contradictory processes may explain why, despite all the troubles of the last 30-40 years, the British police remain one of the more trusted public services; indeed, why, despite a marked decline in trust and confidence, an underlying positive public perception of the police remains (Loader and Mulcahy, 2003; c.f. Hough, 2007; Reiner, 2000). The close link – virtual correspondence – between willingness to engage in informal social control and the expressed consent central to Beetham's notion of legitimacy casts further light on these associations. In the senses outlined above engagement in, perhaps, 'new parochial' social control is inevitably reflective, even constitutive, of police legitimacy. Despite the recent emphasis on alternate, usually private, providers of crime control and order maintenance (Crawford, 2003; Johnston, 1992; Newburn, 2001), for most people in Great Britain the police are usually the first, and often the only, port of call when it comes to invoking outside assistance in the maintenance of social order (again, at least as far as these ideas are represented here).

Many criminologists have turned to the ideas of Pierre Bourdieu in an attempt to understand how police legitimacy is reproduced by and through the actions of the policed (Loader and Mulcahy, 2003; Mawby, 2002). It does not seem unreasonable to suggest that what can be seen here is in part the *habitus* in action (Bourdieu, 1979; 1990). Diverse social-psychological and sociological structures and phenomena – such as the desire/need to maintain social order and the cohesiveness and moral order of the group; and the existence of formal monopolists of legitimate force – act on and through the behaviour of individuals, who, by engaging in specific acts of social control are channelled toward re-affirming the position of the police.

So what is the role of procedural justice? Perhaps ideas about police fairness and engagement with local communities are important in two ways. Firstly, the notion that the police are 'proto-typical group representatives', associated with the perceived failures *and* successes of the existing social order, is strongly supported by the data described here. If the police can act in ways which indicate shared group membership to people through displays of procedural fairness and associated behaviours, this may not only enhance cooperation and support – and legitimacy – but may also be associated with lower levels of concern about crime and disorder. Secondly, procedural justice concerns (and assessments of police effectiveness) open up the space for individual circumstance and exigency always envisaged in the concept of *habitus*. For all that calling the police may be an act constitutive of its legitimacy, what subsequently transpires reflects back onto that legitimacy. If officers are found to act in an unfair or unjust manner, if they fail to communicate shared group membership to those with whom they have contact, then the

legitimacy of the police, as represented precisely by propensities to support or cooperate in the future, may well suffer.

We do not therefore wish to appear panglossian about the mechanisms of the reproduction of police legitimacy. There are positive implications from this research in terms of the potential for procedural justice-type techniques to improve police-public relations, and in terms of the apparent existence of certain sets of social orientations which act as buffers against otherwise damaging events or situations. But a central finding has been that key factors which seem to influence not only public assessments of police activities but also its legitimacy, its right to be recognised and involved as the institution entitled and enabled to deal with crime, are far removed from arenas traditionally under its purview. Police legitimacy, while of course affected by assessments of the organisation itself, is also inherently bound up in much wider structures of feeling and thought.

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CONCLUDING REMARKS

This thesis comprises two somewhat distinct components. The first three papers set out to investigate in some depth the point of contact between police and public – in terms of frequency, change over time, the ways in which such encounters are read, and above all implication in terms of trust and legitimacy. The final two papers brought into play the broader framework of public opinions of and ideas about the police, within which any understanding of the nature and impact of personal contact must be embedded. This twin-track approach allowed integration of the social-psychological insights of the procedural justice model with more sociologically oriented accounts of the place of police in late or post-modern Britain.

In conclusion, I will bring together the main findings from each of the papers and attempt to incorporate them into a more cohesive whole than would be possible if they had remained entirely separate. I will also examine some of the limitations of the present study.

Summary of the five papers

Setting the scene for what followed, the first paper sought to describe broad trends in public opinions of the police and rates of contact over the last 20-25 years, and also to understand the converging nature of many of these trends in the light of the homogenisation theories of Ulrich Beck and Zygmunt Bauman. The study found that the importance of personal experience in forming opinions of the police appears to have grown slightly over time, something itself explicable in light of ideas which stress an increasing primary of individualised orientations to the social world (at the expense of those informed by generational experience or ethno-cultural background, for example). The arguments presented underline the importance of understanding individual experiences of the police – while of course not claiming that social/cultural background is somehow irrelevant. Furthermore, despite recent claims to the contrary, public experiences of the police are not entirely asymmetrical in their impact (Skogan 2006) but that, at the macro-level at least, space exists for the possibility that trust, confidence and perhaps police legitimacy can be enhanced by positive experiences.

This policy-relevant finding is explored in more depth in the second paper, a task made more urgent by recent changes to police performance management regimes (Home Office

2008) that place public trust at the centre of both national and local targets regimes. The central issue is whether, as proposed by 'reassurance' and 'neighbourhood' policing policies, increasing the level and quality of police-public interaction can enhance public opinion. Or have the police, directed to implement policies which improve public confidence, been given an impossible task, since there is little officers can do to enhance opinions but much they can do to damage them? Using data from the MPS Public Attitudes Survey (PAS), the second paper unpacks trust in the police into three distinct realms which resonate strongly with much of the trust literature (for example Barber 1983; Six 2003); effectiveness, fairness and community engagement. Findings concur with those from the first essay. While the association between contact and trust is asymmetrical, negatively received contact having a much stronger statistical effect than positive, this is not entirely the case, and positively-received contact can have a small positive effect on opinions of police fairness and community engagement. The data also suggest that other police activities, such as visible patrolling and the provision of information to the public, can also have uplifting effects on trust.

The second paper also introduces the procedural justice model into the empirical component of thesis, and presents some evidence for the existence of a procedural justice effect in the PAS data. This point is picked up by the third submission, which moves on to an in-depth analysis of one type of police-public interaction, that between crime victims and the officers and police staff dealing with their case. Some of the key predictions of the model are tested: that procedural justice is valued over instrumental concerns, that the experience of fair procedures is associated with more favourable opinions of the police, and that fair treatment leads to increased acceptance of police actions and decisions (Tyler 1990; Tyler and Huo 2002). Evidence supporting all three propositions is presented. The extent to which the experience of unfair treatment damages acceptance of concrete police actions is particularly striking, and overall, within the limits of the data available, the potential explanatory strength of the procedural justice model in the UK is amply demonstrated. This paper, again within the confines of the available data, also tries to take account of that which people bring to their encounters with the police, and which might affect their experiences, by using Easton's (1975) notions of specific and diffuse support. Unsurprisingly, people's general opinion of the police – their level of diffuse support – is found to influence how they experience and interpret encounters. But it is not found to predetermine the outcome. People with low levels of diffuse support can change their

minds about the police, particularly if they find the process to be procedurally fair. This, again, is of particular policy relevance.

The fourth paper moves discussion away from personal contact *per se* and onto other potential roots or sources of public opinions. Two models of confidence in the police are assessed. The first draws on work which has discussed the role that lay assessments of social cohesion, low-level disorder and the breakdown of community play in forming and influencing opinions of the police, suggesting that opinions of the police are in large part expressive of these concerns and others. This model is contrasted with the second, which would hold that police are judged primarily in instrumental ways, and specifically in the light of perceived levels of, and worry about, crime. Strong evidence is presented which supports the first model. Indeed, concerns about low-level disorder in particular are found to be strongly predictive of both ideas about crime *and* opinions of police effectiveness, which themselves are only very weakly associated once ideas abut disorder and cohesion are taken into account. This distinction between expressive and instrumental concerns, with the former predominant, mirrors of course that drawn by Tyler's work on procedural justice.

Sociological accounts of the place of the police in British culture are drawn upon to offer an explanation for these patterns. If the police represent nation, state and/or community (Waddington 1999; Girling, Loader et al. 2000; Reiner 2000; Loader and Mulcahy 2003) it is not surprising that police are judged in the light of ideas about the moral and social decline of these social structures, a decline represented most pertinently in people's everyday lives not by serious crime but by low-level disorder – graffiti, vandalism, teenagers 'hanging around' – and a sense of lost community. More meat is thus added to the bones of the procedural justice model, which argues that the reason why people value procedural fairness is because it demonstrates shared group membership with the authority concerned, and also communicates status within the group. The argument can be made that in Great Britain (or at least London) the group the police represent is for many people the nation/state as a broadly conceived community of interest and affect, which is under threat from growing disorder and breakdown in community but which must also, to some extent, take the blame for these phenomena.

The interplay between on the one hand broader social concerns (declines in cohesion and morality) and perceptions of disorder, and on the other procedural justice concerns, is

explored more fully in the final paper; specifically with regard to the impact of all three sets of ideas on the legitimacy of the police. Legitimacy in this paper is measured indirectly: following both Tyler and Beetham the extent to which people report a willingness to cooperate with the police is held to be indicative of the legitimacy they grant to it. The paper reveals the complex web of associations and paths which lead toward, and away from, readiness to assist the police. Two sets of findings are of particular relevance to the overall thesis. Firstly, net of many other factors, perceptions of police fairness and community engagement are linked positively to propensities to cooperate. The more fair and engaged with the community you think the police are, the more likely you are to say you would offer them support. The legitimacy of the police may therefore be directly affected by personal contacts with officers (among other things). Perceptions of police effectiveness are also associated with cooperation, although the link is weaker.

Secondly, police legitimacy appears to be influenced by perceptions of social breakdown in more complex ways than the data presented in the fourth paper could accomodate. Those who perceive morality and order to be in decline and see high levels of disorder in their locality have lower opinions of police effectiveness and community engagement/fairness, which in turn is linked to lower levels of what Beetham calls expressed consent. But controlling for opinions of police fairness and performance – that is, perhaps, net of trust in the police organisation – perceived moral decline and disorder are also linked directly with increased intention to support the police. In as much as this represents legitimacy, the position of the police in this regard is therefore *enhanced* by a sense that the established order is under threat, perhaps because people turn to the police institution at times of perceived 'crisis', and particularly when they feel a heightened need to exert some form of social control. Police legitimacy can therefore be simultaneously undermined and reinforced by the same social processes. The fifth paper concludes with some thoughts on the implications of this, not least the idea that such contradictory processes may help explain why the legitimacy of the British police, despite all the problems it has faced (and created), has not precipitously declined, but rather may have reached a new equilibrium. Or, to put it another way, why the police is the 'teflon service' (Reiner 2003).

The five papers submitted in this thesis therefore provide many answers to the research questions originally laid down. Patterns of contact with the police are shown to have changed over time, arguably, as a result of changes associated with the late or 'liquid' modern condition, in the direction of a greater similarity of experience among people from

different population groups. Such contact, at the present time at least, appears to be judged largely in line with the predictions of the procedural justice model – fair process, decent treatment and correct actions are valued ahead to instrumental concerns. Procedurally fair experiences are linked to more favourable opinions of the police, both generally and at a more disaggregated level – in the data presented decent treatment is linked to higher opinions of police fairness and community engagement, although not effectiveness. These 'components of confidence' are themselves closely related to the different aspects of trust outlined in various parts of the literature, and, as predicted by Tyler and colleagues, higher levels of trust appear to be linked with perceiving the police to be more legitimate.

But recall that the procedural justice model goes much further. It suggests that the reason people value the way they are treated by authorities such as the police is that such treatment communicates shared group membership and status. But why should people care about the group they might or might not share with the police? The broadly criminological literature which positions the police as representative of nation, state, community and a settled order suggests an answer which finds support in the evidence developed here. Trust in the police suffers if people perceive more disorder around them. This is congruent with the idea that disorder signifies to people social and moral decline; the position of the police, representative of community or the state, suffers when people perceive things to be 'getting out of hand'; when nobody is acting when things are happening which ought not to be. On the other hand, many individuals wish to address such situations. They seek to apply informal social control, and the social structure of modern Britain – its habitus – predisposes them to turn to the police, agents of formal social control and also representatives of exactly the institutions which *can* act to correct or rebalance. People care about the way they are treated by police officers because those officers represent to them some of the most important institutions of modern British life, institutions which still, despite undoubted challenges, seem to them important, powerful and maybe even effective – community, nation, state as well, of course, the police service itself.

Limitations of this research and ideas for the future

As is the case for all social research, some care must be taken with the findings related here. In particular, the reported results – with the exception of elements of the fourth and fifth papers – were derived from secondary analysis of pre-existing datasets. In most cases the questions and response categories were developed by others and adapted for use in the analyses shown, an issue most pertinent with regard to the third paper. In order to fully

explore and test the associations put forward further work is needed which uses specially designed question sets directly addressing the issues at hand. The cross-sectional nature of the data used is also a potential problem, especially in analyses which seek to show the impact of contact experiences on trust. In cross-sectional analyses this link can only ever be associational, not causal; one obvious extension of this work is therefore a panel study precisely to assess such causal links, an approach which has already been taken in the US (see Tyler and Fagan 2008).

A further issue is that many of the points raised in the fourth and fifth papers can only be inferred analytically, since they may be far removed from respondent's everyday understanding. For example the nature of the suggested link between disorder and opinions of the police (representing that which is both meant and able to address disorder) is probably in part a preconscious affective association which many people would find hard to fully vocalize. Some may even reject the categories used and associations drawn, for example if for reasons of self-presentation they wish to appear critical of the police, even as the answers they give to survey questions are fully interpretable in light of the theoretical schema put forward (that is, they are openly *dis*trustful of the police, but still say they would act in ways affirming its legitimacy which must draw in part on underlying reservoirs of trust). Such issues may not be a problem in many areas of research, but when discussing such a high-profile institution, about which many people have very strong feelings, it may pay to bear them in mind. Qualitative work might be one way to flesh out such issues, since it allows a more nuanced exploration of people's views, although even here the identification of the police with settled community and order is, in the final analysis, a post-hoc categorisation made by the researcher since most people simply do not talk or think in these terms (although some certainly do - see Girling, Loader et al. 2000).

More broadly, of course, what people say in survey interviews and what they really mean (or would actually do) may be quite different things (Cornwall 1984). The accounts of those interviewed in the surveys used here may be publicly supportive and privately critical of the police, much as Cornwall found in her work looking at opinions of the NHS. Even today, many people may feel it improper, even disloyal, to be openly negative about the police no matter what they think privately (something which may ironically be indicative of residual identification with the police). More prosaically, others may be wary of voicing contrary opinions in surveys conducted on behalf of the Home Office or Metropolitan Police. Among such individuals it may be that the paths traced here from personal

experience of the police to trust and on to legitimacy are complicated, even obfuscated, by variation between the answers they give and their true opinions.

But the reverse may be equally true. In particular, the putative distinction between the police organisation, perhaps criticised for being ineffective, weak, or 'politically correct', and the police institution, still linked with visions of community, nation and a more cohesive past and which commands almost pre-rational support, is highly suggestive. Some people may be openly critical of the organisation, but retain a strong identification with the institution – or, perhaps, with a particular *idea* of the police. Such combinations of opinion might be particularly relevant among those on the political right, and more in-depth consideration of the associations between political views and opinions of the police (even trust and legitimacy) would be a welcome and useful extension of this work (Tyler and Boeckmann 1997). In other words, there may well be issues arising from contradictions between respondent's public and private voices but these might not always fall into the neat categories of 'public equals supportive' and 'private equals critical'.

A further complication for the work presented here is another inherent to most quantitative analysis. In all cases the statistical models utilised are predictive of the mean values of the response variable. So, for example, when the claim is made that a one unit increase in the perceived procedural fairness of the police is predicted to be associated with a 0.16 unit increase in propensity to cooperate with them, this is only strictly true at the mean level of propensity to support. People with other levels of intention to support may require a much greater shift in perceptions of procedural fairness (or one much smaller) to alter their propensity to cooperate (Hohl 2009). While there are few obvious conceptual issues with this on a macro-sociological or broad social-psychological basis, since what is at stake in these cases are the basic social or psychological mechanisms affecting public opinions, this might not be true if the focus moves toward the micro-level. In particular, it may be that among those traditionally the focus of much criminological work, not only 'deviants' but those from marginalised, stigmatised or neglected groups who might have very different levels of trust in the police and justifications for police legitimacy, divergent strengths of association, or indeed the absence of such, may exist between procedural fairness and legitimacy (for example).

This issue is compounded because we do not expect many such people to be included in sample surveys such as the PAS and BCS. That is, the estimates presented here may suffer

from sampling bias arising from the under-representation of people from social or other groups with structures of feeling about the police varying from the (arguably) dominant ones presented. To take one example, if people from some social groups underrepresented in the survey data place more emphasis on instrumental versus expressive concerns, this could result in exaggeration of the importance of police fairness and community engagement at the expense of effectiveness.

Whether these concerns are substantive matters is an empirical question not addressed in this thesis, in part because the research design was focussed on establishing the existence of the phenomena in question and hopefully providing a spring board for further research. In as much as the original design 'delivered' it may be important, even imperative, that more detailed analyses are now undertaken. Policy recommendations aimed at police organisations would be devalued if the mechanisms suggested for improving public confidence did not 'work' among those with very negative views or who came into frequent contact with officers. There is some evidence that the ideas of the procedural justice model find purchase even among the most marginalised and stigmatised – inmates in Britain's prisons (Sparks and Bottoms 1995; Leibling 2004). But much more is needed if a full and rounded picture of the nature of the relationship between police and public is to be forthcoming. One particularly important issue might be opinions among people from ethnic minority groups, especially in light of the apparently central role of 'shared-group membership' in public assessments of the police. Put simply, what if people from some ethnic minority groups feel, for whatever reason, that they do not share group membership with the police?

As ever, there is a danger in being overly pessimistic. The patterns and associations described in this thesis appear to be robust, and broadly correspond with other existing and emerging data. There is relatively little to suggest at this stage that the ideas of procedural justice, and the promise it holds out for improving police-community relations, enhancing public cooperation with the police, and even reinforcing law-abiding behaviour, do not apply across wide swathes of the British population. On the basis of the work presented in this thesis and that from other sources it seems likely that future work in this area would start from the premise that a procedural justice effect exists across Great Britain – such a hypothesis may, of course, be subject to revision or even dismissal in specific social or cultural contexts.

A final word

A basic message of these thesis is therefore that procedural justice matters in the British context. People do care about how they are treated by the police, and, on average, they care more about the quality of personal treatment at the hands of officers than they do about any material outcomes those officers might be able to offer. As suggested by Tyler and others fair and decent treatment is linked to enhanced trust in the police and, perhaps at this stage slightly less certainly, legitimacy. Furthermore, the core idea of shared group membership also resonates strongly with dominant British tropes surrounding the police. The police do seem to represent, to many at least, core social and political structures – nation, state, community, order – which people find relevant and, importantly, to which they feel they belong. The actions of police officers communicate to individuals powerful messages about their inclusion and status within the social group(s) and structures they feel the police represent. Equally, how people experience their interactions with officers cannot be separated out from their orientations toward these broader social structures. Powerful feedback loops are likely to exist wherein, for example, people's level of trust in the police and the state they represent influence how they judge the actions of officers during any personal interactions.

However it does not seem that general orientations overwhelm specific experiences. As such the work presented here contains a forceful message for police forces tasked with enhancing public confidence. It is the quality of treatment which counts. Yet temptations to accentuate a 'tea-and-sympathy' approach notwithstanding this is unlikely to be all that is required. Decent treatment is certainly needed. So is fairness, the demonstration of proper procedure and competence, and taking people seriously as individuals and as citizens. Procedural justice therefore offers a useful tool for police. But its location within a much wider, and deeper, set of orientations and emotions should counter against an over-optimistic assessment of the potential for enhancing trust, confidence or legitimacy. People think about the police in very complicated ways which appear only partially related to the actual organisation itself.

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