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Abstract

The police force in the United States often faces charges of racism, incompetence and corruption.  As someone who wants to pursue a career in law enforcement I want to understand the role of police force in American society.  By focusing on attempts to professionalize and diversify the police forces I examine the challenges faced by law enforcement officers and steps taken to respond to those challenges.  The attempt to professionalize has been taken place ever since police departments were formed. You find that police departments have been trying to get better and have a better relationship with public ever since they were created. I also looked into when the attempt to diversify started taking place, and as you might expect it started taking place during the civil rights movement during the 1960’s. By focusing on the Rampart Scandal I look at the difficulties of changing police forces to respond to changing societal needs. The Los Angeles Police Department  in their attempt to become more professional while diversifying after the Rodney King incident essentially had a fast paced hiring to get minority officers into the department after the riots and beatings. The LAPD would hire officers like Rafael Perez in who had ties to gangs. Many of the LAPD police did everything from framing people for murder, to robbing banks. Once this scandal was discovered the LAPD  spent a lot of money getting this settled. You have the question of who is to blame. Some would say that you have to blame the institution as a whole. They say ever since police departments have formed they have had corruption. Then you would have some that say you don’t blame the institution as a whole, you blame the few “bad apples” that get into the system and turn to corrupt ways of working. As someone who wants to be a police officer I think you have to blame the individuals that take their authority and abuse it. I don’t think that police departments are anymore corrupt than any other institutions; I conclude that we should not blame the whole police department for acts of few corrupt individuals.

Lonnie Kirby

Policing

In the United States police officers are about everywhere. If you live in a small town you probably have at least one police officer. Police officers are expected to be perfect in everything they do. They are expected to catch every killer, they are expected to be at a 911 callers front door step in an instance, and they are expected to be professional, and be fair with everyone. Police officers do there very best to do all these things. Sometimes though, like in any profession the wrong people get hired on to the police department and abuse their power. This has created through out the years a push to diversify and professionalize police departments.

According to Dan Sabath, the history of police in the United States starts with the City of Boston’s night watchers in 1636. As with most government institutions in America, law enforcement is no different, it got its ideas from Great Britain. The more formal police departments come in during, “the almost 100 years between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, the rapid growth of population and industrialization in America forced departments to develop.” (Sabath) The first two police departments to develop in the United States were the Philadelphia and New York City, 1833 and 1844 respectively. Philadelphia had a 24-hour a day police force while New York City had two separate forces daytime and nighttime. During this time period the police officers were appointed by police chiefs and accountable to political bosses. Sabath writes, “Corruption was commonplace.” The oldest form of police that we still have today are the Sheriff departments, they were popular as the U.S got bigger and expanded west, the people of the town would appoint a sheriff to keep peace.

Eric Monkkonen put together an essay based on a collection of books, essays and positions of people that described and brought together the history of policing. From the Constitution, police as we know it was never mentioned. Night watchers were the first documented people in small towns to have some sort of duty to protect the town. Although, they did not do much but sleep, and were someone who worked for the lower level courts, Constables were the ones that people could pay their fees too serve civil papers and were self supported by the amount of work they did. The United States soon modeled the policing system of London. These new systems of police were cheaper then military forces, they were resented less by the public, and responded better to civil authorities.

Monkkonen described there to be four major parts to the new policing system. One being the hierarchal system like that is done in the military. This gave better communications within officers and helped the response times. The second being that police were taken from the judicial branch and moved up and were considered in the executive branch. The third part of the new system was the introduction of uniforms. These were frowned upon at first but seemed to improve the system by a great deal. This made it easier to spot an officer by the public, which in turn helped citizens and the employers. The last and possibly most important new part of the system was when police were set on salary and were sent out to patrol and now prevent crime. Their salaries were apart of city budgets and in turn made policing jobs more attractive to the public. Police were also involved with political acts such as during voting times.

Policing was different depending on the area. Urban areas had the funds to support such a costly service, but smaller towns took longer to develop their system. Police were a form response to all the riots and criminal disorder in the cities. Yet policing patrolling began to decline after the nineteenth century. As the workday got shorter and the two shift system of twelve hours on, twelve hours off went away. The three-shift system was introduced. “Police presence began declining with four decades after their introduction to cities” (Monkkonen 554). Although the creation of the police was to prevent and handle crime they soon became handling other jobs not intended by the creators. Monkknonen describes that police were handling sanitation laws, stray pets, returning lost children, taking in tramps, inspecting boilers and dispersing welfare and many other things that we think police today as doing. Although when the policing system was created they were not intended for this type of work. “Street presence virtually forced them to become city servants as well as crime-control officers” (Monkkonen, 554). 1894 was a sort of turning point in the policing as they shed the roles as “city servants” and put back on the hat as crime control.

Today policing is not done by neighborhood watchman or night guards, it is done by a professionalized police force. Although in the eighteenth century every small town and large city was different. It merely depended on the place and what kind of budget they had. Catherine Denys, the author of *The Development of Police Forces in Urban Europe in the Eighteenth Century* states the differences and benefits of policing in the neighborhoods rather than and professionalized police force. What would be called “community policing” in today’s times is what kind of policing was done in towns that could not afford or simply did not want a police force in the eighteenth century. In large cities that were growing everyday because of migrants, and economic growth having small neighborhood organizations could not guarantee the cities safety. Although for most cities that size they did not have the finances to support such a force to control everything. They soon found that having smaller neighborhood organizations was an easier, cheaper, and better way to control safety, and security. Within a smaller district they were employed to prevent disorder and maintain the public calm. Such as in the city of Naples there were twenty-nine smaller neighborhoods or wards that had their own neighborhood organizations. These constables were like the middleman between city officials and local people. “Their duties consisted of maintaining order, prosperity, and security among citizens. “(Denys, 339) These constables also had other duties such as dispensing aid to the poor, and passports. Not only did these men have the job of policing but they could also get other aspects of the town taken care of which in turn saved the town money. The town would not have to create more jobs as the neighborhood constables would take care of it. In Ghent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there were about two hundred different neighborhoods that had their own policing organizations. “The neighborhood was expected to foster civil tranquility, resolve minor conflicts on its own, and help authorities find and arrest criminals.” (Denys, 340) in Ghent the neighborhood organizations had much more responsibility and were more formalized then smaller towns elsewhere. The type of force would depend on the size of the town or city, the amount of money set away for policing and the type of people that lived there. Although Denys suggests that neighborhood or community policing was the best devise or policing in that time period. As, it was cheaper and easier for the small but growing towns of the era.

The case study I looked at was the Los Angles Police Department, and the Rampart division. This was a division of the LAPD that was known for their tough stance on crime. They were hired to make their neighborhood safer and some would argue that is exactly what they did. The problem with the Ramparts division is that they didn’t police in a professional way, and might be one of the biggest scandals in police history.

Police have gotten a bad rap through out the years, whether it was from police brutality issues, profiling, or other scandals. When you think of police you probably think of the bad things that cops are known for. The Los Angles Rampart scandal is at the root of these allegations.

The Rampart scandal refers to widespread corruption in the [Community Resources Against Street Hoodlums](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_Resources_Against_Street_Hoodlums) (or CRASH) anti-[gang](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gang) unit of the [Los Angeles Police Department](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Los_Angeles_Police_Department), better known as the LAPD, [Rampart Division](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LAPD_Rampart_Division) in the late 1990s. More than 70 [police officers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Police_officer) either assigned to or associated with the Rampart CRASH unit were implicated in some form of misconduct, making it one of the most widespread cases of documented [police misconduct](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Police_misconduct) in [United States history](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_history). The convicted offenses include unprovoked shootings, unprovoked beatings, [planting of false evidence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Falsified_evidence), [framing of suspects](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frameup), [stealing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theft) and dealing [narcotics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narcotics), [bank robbery](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bank_robbery), [perjury](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perjury), and [the covering up of evidence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cover-up) of these activities. (Kaplan, 61)

The Rampart precinct has jurisdiction over a 7.9 square mile section of Los Angles. According to 1998 data, it is a section of the city that is very poor, with 37%of its population reporting an income under 15,000 dollars a year. The most densely populated part of Los Angles 40% of its almost 190,000 residents reported only have up to eight years of education, and only 17% reported having had some high school education. 79% of its residents self identify as Latino. (Grant, 391)

Judith Grant argues in her article that, because of the number and intensity of police corruption scandals, like Rampart’s, that actually they are not scandals, they are the norm. She argues that police believe that in order to enforce the law they must break it. She uses the Rampart scandal as her case study to show that it was just every day life, not corruption. She quotes People v. McMurty, 1971 “Policemen see themselves as fighting a two front war against criminals in the street and against liberal rules of law in court. All’s fair in this war including the use of perjury to subvert liberal rules of law that might free those who ought to be jailed.(Grant, 385) She makes this point trying to show that in prior cases judges have, sort of given their approval to bend the rules when the police officers need too. Later on in her paper she explains how the way police bend the law, or even break the law is due to how society has portrayed them. She says, “ Police corruption scandals are common. It is well known that police, as a group, lie on the witness stand, plant evidence, and are given to ignoring procedural rules.” (Grant, 387) Here she is portraying all cops to be the same, she is generalizing them and saying that they lie, and cheat the system. Later on in the paper she talks about, how since police corruption is so common it would be useful to look at the very structure of police power. Grant says, “Perhaps the problem is not just a few rotten apple cops, but something more like a structural tension between force and law that further results in a tendency for police to repeatedly use power inappropriately. Perhaps the problem lies in the very institutionalization of this kind of police power. So her conclusion is that for Hollywood and video games it is nice to put the blame of police corruption on a few individuals but in reality it isn’t just a couple individuals, it is the institution of how police departments are ran.

Paul Kaplan’s Looking Through the Gaps: LAPD’s Rampart Scandal, is kind of the same look into police corruption. He tries to argue that while the organization, and individualist approaches are important to look at, he would like to look at the justice system institution. He says, “My goal is to suggest critical lines of inquiry that have been ignored by official investigators and media commentators so far. Specifically I hop to draw attention away from individualist or organizational approaches to the LAPD’s troubles and toward an approach attending to the justice system institution.” (Kaplan, 62) He has two factors that go into this and those are the “ideological war on terror” and “The privileged position of police narratives in t criminal trials.” (Kaplan, 62) What he is saying here is that by giving something a name like the “War on Terror” we are giving cops the appearance that we want it to be war like, so if that means breaking rules to get the job done then by all means do it. “When any solider go to war, they must have enemies. When cops go to war against crime, their enemies are found in inner cities and among our minority populations. There, in a country as foreign to most officer as Vietnam was GI’s, cops have trouble distinguishing good guys from bad guys.” (Kaplan, 74) Kaplan is trying to show that buy just using the phrase “war on terror” it gives cops a different outlook on their job.

He also points out that the LAPD Board of Inquiry Report suggests that along with Perez there was 13 other officers that the LAPD would scrutinize, and of those 14 officers, “four had questionable issues in their pre-employment background which strongly indicate they never should have been hired as Los Angeles Police Officers” (Kaplan, 66) Kaplan says, “This failure is blamed on bureaucratic problems and pressures to hire more officers. This view is essential to the LAPD’s fundamental argument that misconduct is not consistent with their standards.” (Kaplan, 66) He also blames the media. He says that the media also played a key role in Ramparts. He puts some of the blame on them because the media plays an important role in getting information out to the people. And the media followed what the LAPD found in their internal investigation. Blaming a few officers for Ramparts, the media did a lot of covering up of the scandal because the LAPD did a good job of selling them what happened. Kaplan calls this the “professional code”. (72) He says that the problem with putting the blame on a few officers or blaming the LAPD is that nothing really gets done, because “institutional-level theories of police misconduct suggest that police misbehavior will probably persist as long as the condition fop or political economy remain essentially the same.” (Kaplan 78) He says that policy recommendations would not be welcome by the audience for policing theories, because it would involve creating conditions of material equality and significantly altering conceptions of the police. And that when scholars do find institutional level factors related to police misconduct they are not likely not to offer any changes beyond the organizational level. (Kaplan 78)

Andrew Murr’s L.A.’s Dirty War On Gangs, has a lot of the similarities of the earlier articles. He says that the Rampart precinct had an encounter with 18th street gang, which is one of the biggest street gangs in Los Angles. In the encountered officers chasing gang members up an apartment complex stairwell, where officers shot and killed one gang member and wounded another. A department investigation found that the cops had done nothing wrong, and the shooting got little coverage in the media. This is referred to as the Shatto Place raid. As we saw in Kaplan’s analysis of what happened the media did little to uncover what was really going on in Los Angles at the time of Rampart’s CRASH scandal. Murr states that the only reason that this Ramparts was brought out to the public was because of a former police officer, who turned whistleblower, Rafael Perez was caught stealing eight pounds of cocaine. “Perez was also involved in the Shatto Place raid, told investigators about the police brutality, perjury, planted evidence, drug corruption, and attempted murder within the Rampart Division and its CRASH unit.”(Murr, 1) Mayor Richard Riordan called this a “dark shadow” over the entire police department, which is still struggling to recover from the Rodney King and O. J. Simpson debacles. (Murr, 1) There is no doubt about it that the Rampart Division was tough on crime, Murr says, “LAPD insiders say the Rampart Division has more than its share of problem cops and that CRASH was known for ultra-aggressive tactics.” Defense lawyer Dennis Chang sais that Rampart CRASH unit, “Behaved like a gang themselves” (Murr, 2)

Adam Cohen’s “Gangsta Cops” comes at the Rampart scandal at a little different angle. He says while what happened in the heart of the Rampart Division was unacceptable, the Rampart CRASH team did lower crime. He quotes Robert Hansohn, “Do you mind what we do to get them off the street?’ they would say no. “Just get rid of the six gang members on that corner.” (Cohen, 3) Basically he is trying to show that the public was alright with the police officer corruption, as long as they were keeping the street’s safe, and in a lot of cases taking gang members off the street and making them safer. “In the 1990’s the CRASH unit certainly lived up to its name, with a confrontational style of policing that aggressively took back the streets. It seemed to be getting results. In the 1960’s the area had 170 murders a year. Last year (1999) there were only 33.” (Cohen, 2) Where he does offer some of the same suggestions that we have seen in the previous articles is how the Rampart Unit got out of hand. He starts off by saying, “a lot of the blame seems to lie with poor hiring practices.”(Cohen, 4) He refers to one kind of hiring called “binge hiring” (Cohen, 5) this is the results of ‘bulking up” the police department, as the L.A.P.D did in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s. He argues that it is hard to bet the best candidates or recruits, when you go and hire mass amounts of officers; this is linked to diversifying police departments, in order to help reflect the public. Los Angles is not the only place this happened, In Washington the police department hired 1,000 police in a hurry for political reasons, since then a quarter of them have ben discharged for misconduct or indicted. (Cohen, 5) He also argues that there is a problem with the justice system, “the seed of corruption begins when cops are asked to fill in the blanks for district attorneys to make cases.” (Cohen, 5) This goes back to the point that was made about the justice system needing to be reformed, because the laws that have been put in place make it so hard to convict someone of a crime a lot of times police officer, have a feeling that it is their duty to make sure that the suspect is convicted of the crime they have been caught doing, “police often find themselves adapting to a corrupt system.” (Cohen, 5) Chief Parks has said that, “Los Angles will be tightened screening of applicants, including better background checks, improved psychological testing, polygraph exams and more management in the field.” (Cohen, 5) This goes to show that even thought these theories try to prove that the corruption is far beyond just a few bad apples, agencies don’t buy into that, they think that they can get rid of the few bad apples and things will be better, and as the bad apples get thrown out of the department the corruption will go away also.

Like Cohen, Terry McCarthy’s “The L.A.P.D. Blues” points out that Rampart did have some bad cases of brutality, and shootings of unarmed gang members, but at least the streets were safer. Ramparts motto was “We intimidate those who intimidate others” (McCarthy, 1) this is exactly what the Rampart CRASH division did, they would meet firepower with firepower and they would not back down from the gangs. If they had to bend a couple of rules they would do so, but they “succeeded in bringing gang-related crimes down 60% from 1992 to 1999. Some might say that Rampart police didn’t have much to do with the crime rate going down, maybe the neighborhoods gangs were moving else where, or something like that. But since the crack down had begun on the police officers, “Homicides went up 38% in Rampart Neighborhoods this year (2000).” (McCarthy, 1) Again like we have seen before McCarthy puts the blame on a few bad apples in the department, he does not believe that the department as a hole, or the institution of police departments are corrupt, he believes that there are a some bad cops, that are out numbered by good cops, but the bad cops shape the public opinion. He quotes Richard Drooyan the former chief assistant United States attorney in Los Angles; in his investigation he found a, “fundamental problem of supervision and leadership.” (McCarthy, 2) He also found that the Unit “developed an independent subculture that embodied a ‘war on gangs’ mentality where the ends justified the means.” (McCarthy, 2) While I am sure that there are a lot of people embarrassed by what happened there are also a lot of people who still support the police and were happy with they safe streets. Greg Taymizyan and local food market owner in the Rampart neighborhood said this, “We needs cops here. Because of a few bad apples, you shouldn’t throw out the whole basket.” (McCarthy, 2) I think this shows that people who were not gangs are perfectly fine with cops being there, they just need to get rid of a couple bad cops but keep up the aggressive mentality.

There is evidence to show that getting rid of the bad apples can be what stops corruption. For example, there have been successful reforms in such cities like New Orleans. New Orleans has been known for having notorious corruption; in the 1990’s one police officer was convicted of murdering a young mother who had three children, who had filed a confidential brutality complaint against him. There was also an instance where 9 police officers were arrested in a sting that convicted selling protection to a cocaine warehouse. And maybe the worst scandal of New Orleans was the raping of a 14-year-old girl where two officers were charged. Over 100 other police officers would be charged with felonies.(Cohen, 5) But within 5 years Richard Pennington the new police superintendent would turn things around in New Orleans. He did this by tightening the screening process for recruits, looking for criminal records but, where he differs, is that he also looked into the financial backgrounds of the recruits. He thought that if they had had money troubles in the past that they would be more susceptible to financial temptation. In those five years department was down 27% in complaints, the city’s murder rate had dropped by 31% and public confidence was growing. (Cohen, 6)

A time line of events of how the scandal was uncovered is as followed, March 18, 1997 an undercover LAPD officer Frank Lyga shot and killed off-duty LAPD officer Kevin Gaines in a road rage incident. Officer Gaines was a black cop and Lyga was a white cop, this created a lot of controversy. Lyga told FRONTLINE that Officer Gaines, “Threatened him with a gun, and that he shot and killed Gaines in self-defense.” (pbs.org) He then told FRONTLINE, “In my training experience this guy had I’m a gang member’ written all over him.” Investigators discovered that Gaines had been involved in similar road rage incidents, threating drivers, and sometimes pulling out his gun. They also discovered connection between Gaines and Death Row Records, a rap-recording label owned by Marion Knight. Investigators found that Knight was hiring off- duty police officers as security guard’s. (pbs.org) As you see in any case where race may come into play Lyga had to wait for a year before he was exonerated a year later, as three separate investigations showed that the shooting was “in policy”. November 6, 1997, A Los Angles branch of Bank of America was robbed and the criminals made of with $722,000. Investigators were suspicious from the get go, because the assistant bank manager Errolyn Romero had more cash then was necessary delivered just 10 minutes before the robbery. In just one month she would confess to her role and she lead authorities too her boyfriend, LAPD officer David Mack, who was in charge of the whole plan. He was arrested and convicted to 14 years and 3 months in federal prisons where he has become associated with the Mob Piru, a prison gang that has ties to Death Row Records. February 26, 1998 L.A.P.D. Officer Brian Hewitt, a member of L.A.P.D.'s elite anti--gang unit [CRASH](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/lapd/scandal/crashculture.html) in the Rampart division, brought 18th Street gang member Ismael Jimenez to the Rampart police station for questioning. Hewitt allegedly beat the handcuffed Jimenez in the chest and stomach, causing him to vomit blood. After being released, Jimenez went to the hospital, where officials notified the L.A.P.D. of his injuries and complaints. Subsequent internal investigations resulted in the firing of Hewitt and another officer, Ethan Cohan, who, the Department determined, knew about but failed to report the beating. March 27, 1998 Officials find that six pounds of cocaine evidence are missing, their investigation leads them too officer Rafael Perez a member of the Rampart CRASH unit. May 1998 The LAPD police chief Bernard Parks establishes a task force to investigate Rafael Perez and other officers who may be connected to Death Row Records. August 25, 1998 Rafael Perez is arrested in his connection of stealing cocaine out of the evidence room. Investigators found that he took it out under another officers name and had his girlfriend sell it on the Rampart streets. When he went to trial the jury was hung with a final vote 8-4. Investigators quickly got more evidence ready for a retrial. September 8, 1999 Rafael Perez cut a deal with prosecutors under which he pled guilty to cocaine theft and agreed to provide prosecutors with information about two bad shooting and three other Rampart CRASH officer involved in illegal activity.

He first tells about a shooting that him and his partner had framed against Javier Ovando. March 3, 2000 LAPD announces that CRASH will be disbanded. April 2000 Police Commission formed the Rampart Independent Review Panel, comprised of citizens including attorneys, educators, and business executives. The panel issued a report in November 2000 with 72 findings and 86 recommendations. They found that officers need better and more supervision. September 19, 2000 a federal judge acting on behalf of the U.S Department of Justice takes over LAPD. November 21, 2000 in the largest police misconduct settlement in city history, Javier Ovando was awarded $15 million. An additional 29 civil suits were settled for nearly $11 million. The city, faced with more than 140 civil suits stemming from the corruption scandal, estimates that total settlement costs will be about $125 million. (Pbs.org)

“Virtually every urban police department in the United States has experienced both organized corruption and a major scandal over that corruption” (Monkkonen, xxiii). Corruption and scandals, gambling, prostitution and drugs have become a common occurrence and it was time for a change in the system. In 1944 the International City Manager Association created a manual on police relations with minority groups. This was spread widely through United States, and cities were beginning to adopt race relation training for their police forces. This helped officers to better work with immigrants moving into the city and for them to better control what was going on in the place they were ordered to protect. With policy changes and reforming the system police were better skilled to do what they were created to do in the first place. That was control the crime, prevent the crime and keep the city safe. In a book entitled *City Limits* written by Paul Peterson he described the end of the most of policing changes very well. “Police shifted to a crime-control emphasis, they became essential to the city’s promotional functions in that they helped provide a safer environment for urban economic activities.” (Monkkonen, xxiii) Police have had played many different roles over the years, although the most important always staying the same. With the changes in time, and policies they have evolved into better-equipped personnel that are there to assist citizens in the time of need.

Tom Tyler’s “To Better Serve and Protect: Improving Police Practices” points out that in order for police to recover from scandals such as Rampart, they must legitimize. One way he suggests is to legitimize is through procedural justice judgments. Procedural justice is basically how police go about doing their jobs, following procedures to make sure that they get their jobs done in a professional way. Tyler suggests that their needs to be changes to the procedure that police take now and he has four ways of doing this. First is participation. He says, “People are more satisfied with procedures tat allow them to participate by explaining their situations and communicating their views about situations to authorities.” (Tyler, 94) He is suggesting that instead of looking at every situation the same police officers must engage with the people who are involved in the situation. This will get the officers better connected with what they are dealing with, so that they can make the right decision. “What people want is to feel that their input has been solicited and considered by decision makers, who can then frame their concerns into an appropriate resolution.” (Tyler, 94)

His second element is neutrality. “People think that decisions are being made more fairly when authorities are unbiased and make their decisions using objective indicators, not personal views.” (Tyler, 94) This issue is big with minority groups like African American’s and poor people. In the past with police officers profiling African Americans, they are more likely to have resentment towards the cops when being questioned, because they think, just because they are black that a cop will side with the person who is complaining when their might not be any crime at all. You see this with the poor as well, because they might be dressed in dirty clothes and homeless, sometimes when cops are called to deal with the poor, their might not be any crime committed but because they “look guilty” they take them in anyways. So if a cop can change the way he goes about dealing with these situations, and put “everyone on a level playing field in which no one is unfairly advantaged.” (Tyler, 94) This is another way that Tyler suggests that cops can increase their legitimacy.

The third way to legitimize is using dignity and respect. Tyler says, “People value being treated with dignity and respect by legal authorities.” (94) People don’t like to be talked down too, he is saying that even though police officers do have authority over a lot of people that they shouldn’t talk to them, with arrogance and rudeness. What he is suggesting is that police officers should try to fit in with the people they are dealing with. “People value being treated with politeness and having their rights acknowledged.” (Tyler, 94) With the constant videos and stories of police officers being rude and violating rights, people have become more hostile towards police officers. For officers to get back their respect they have to treat them with respect.

The last thing he suggests is that, “people feel that procedures are fairer when they trust the motives of the authorities.” (Tyler, 95) What he is saying is that if the people that are involved, believe that the authorities have their well-being and are considering their needs and concerns they will view the procedures as more fair, even if they do not agree with the out come. Tyler says that officers can get people to view them as trustworthy by “explaining their decisions and justifying and accounting for their conduct in ways that make clear their concern about giving attention to peoples needs.” (Tyler, 95) This could be the most important aspect of legitimacy for officers, because sometimes you have one chance to impact how someone will view you, and police officers as a whole, and if you can gain their trust the first time you come into contact with them, that will carry threw for a long time.

In New York City reform has come in many ways. On August 12, 2013 Judge Shira Scheindlin ruled that the New York Police Department (NYPD) long standing stop-and-frisk policy amounted to racial profiling and was landmark in United States law enforcement. This ruling would put the NYPD under a form of federal oversight known as federal monitoring. Federal monitors and consent decrees are the official method for correcting civil rights abuses by law enforcement in the United States and have been used throughout the country since the mid-1990s in cities such as Los Angeles, Washington, Pittsburgh and Cincinnati. There are active consent decrees in Detroit, Oakland, New Orleans and Seattle - consent decrees are the legal agreement under which federal monitors are appointed. (Winston)

President Bill Clinton was a president who used these consent decrees a lot, trying to get police departments back under control. He implemented these consent decrees in Pittsburgh, Washington D.C, Los Angles, and New Jersey. This would change under George W. Bush. This administration would see the number of pattern-and-practice lawsuits brought by the Justice Department go way down. “Pattern-and-practice lawsuits are the investigations that form the bedrock of consent decrees.” (Winston) President Bush would only have a couple of major consent decrees during his presidency from 2000-2008 and those were Detroit and Oakland police departments. Oakland was the result of a class action brought by over 100 plaintiffs alleging systematic brutality by a group of four rough cops knows as “Riders”. (Winston) Samuel Walker a professor emeritus of criminal justice at the University of Nebraska-Omaha said that, “The Department of Justice walked away from the big cities during the Bush years…Nobody touched Chicago or New York City, when there arguably was a need for federal investigations” (Winston)

Consent decrees have come a long way since their first settlement agreement for the Pittsburg Police in 1997. “The Department of Justice has learned how complex policing is and how complex remedies are,” said Walker. (Winston) Consent decrees were controversial form the start. Some police department agencies deliberately dragged their feet on implementing reform, such as, New Jersey State Police and the City of Oakland Police Department. Former command staff members remarked that the consent decree “sat in a desk drawer” for the first two years of implementation.

Cincinnati police where placed under federal oversight because of a 2001 killing of a teenager by a Cincinnati police officer, triggering 3 days of rioting. The court appointed monitor was Saul Green and the relationship between him and the Cincinnati Police Department became a “Mutual contempt” relationship according to then-Mayor Charlie Luken. (Winston) Things became so bad that one time Green was escorted out of Cincinnati Police Headquarters by the police chief. This bad relationship would be smoothed out by a federal judge and Cincinnati would successfully complete its reform program in 2009. Green would say that this was, “One of the most successful police reforms ever undertaken in this country.” (Winston)

Consent decrees and federal monitoring are credited with reforming the Los Angeles Police Department in the wake of [the Rampart scandal](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/lapd/scandal/cron.html). When William Bratton took over the LAPD he embraced the reform program and made sure it got implemented by making it a department wide priority. This resulted in community relations with the LAPD to improve while crime decreased. In a 2009 survey by Harvard’s Kennedy school of Government found that 83% of resident said LAPD were policing in and effective and even handed way. (Winston) There are some that don’t think the consent decree is to be credited in Los Angles. David Sklansky a Berkeley School of Law professor, who was an independent investigator on the Ramparts scandal said, “Much of the credit for that has to go to the consent decree, but a great deal of the credit must also go to the LAPD itself and to the way that it responded, from the chief on down, to the demands placed on it by the consent decree” (Winston) The LAPD’s successful reform is a the main reason that they were able to reverse once hostile relationships with African-Americans and Latinos. This is not the case in Oakland where they refuse to change from their “old-guard” principles. This has led to partial control of the police department by court appointed compliance directors and cost residents tens of millions of dollars. Oakland’s violent crime rate has spiraled out of control as the police departments skewed compensation system, which annually consumes 40 percent of Oakland’s general fund, leads to understaffing and more than two-thirds of the city’s murders going unsolved. (Winston)

As someone who would like to be a police officer I looked at this issue in a way that could benefit me, once I become a police officer. I thought a lot about why are police officers perceived as being so corrupt, and have such a bad reputation amongst minorities. What I found is that police officers have gotten a bad image through the media, and Hollywood. Think about how many movies that are out there that are based on a cop using his power to push around citizens and do things to benefit him. Think about all the television shows out there that are about bad cops. The list is huge, and people carry what they see over from the T.V. to everyday life. If you have ever watched the news you have probably seen a story where a cop did the wrong thing and beat some one or maybe even killed someone who was innocent. Hardly ever do you see a story about the police officer doing the right thing, maybe saving a child’s life, or helping a stranded motorist. I’m not saying that police officers would want to be recognized for that on and individual basis or should be recognized for doing that on an individual basis but there should be a push from the media to not just cover one side of the story.

There is obliviously evidence that police officers and police department have had problems with corruption. But I think you have to ask yourself are police departments and police officers any more corrupt than any other profession? I think that it is in the human nature for someone that get a little bit of power to abuse their power, you see this in politics or even in the business world. If someone can take advantage of something a lot of times they will do it. Usually the institution as a whole though is not corrupt. It is usually a couple people who abuse their power who get a bad name for everyone else.

As you see with the Ramparts Scandal if you rush into trying to professionalize and diversify all at the same time, you can run into real trouble. The Los Angeles police department was faced with a tough task of diversifying their police department very quickly. They rushed through the hiring process to hire a few minority officers to help deal with the declining relationship between the LAPD and the public. When they rushed through this they found that it was real easy to put the wrong people into the uniform and in return made their department look even worse to the citizens of Los Angle’s and America.

I understand the need to diversify police departments. The two big reasons I see for diversifying them are to have a better relationship with the minorities, and also to benefit the department. In the past police haven’t had the best reputations with African Americans. By putting African Americans on the department, you take some of that stress away from the citizens. But probably not all because still you will have people who will not trust the police, no matter what they do. The other part is that you put officers on the department who can relate to the minorities. So if you have a white officer who might not have any luck dealing with a minority neighborhood, if you put someone who is of the same race and can relate with these people you will have a better chance of stopping crime, and solving crime because they will feel more comfortable with the police.

Professionalizing police just seems like common sense. As more and more places are requiring a bachelors degree to even apply, I would think that you should need a bachelors degree to apply to be a police officer. Being such a prestigious job where many people look up to you and your are looked at as a professional I think that you should have to go thorough probably, the most extensive application process that there is to become a cop. To become a police officer you have to go through so many things like physical testing, you have to be able to run so fast and be so strong. You will go through extensive background searches.

Also you will go through interviews with many different people to just be considered for the job. After that you will be sent to a police academy for 3 to 6 months and on completion of that you will be placed with a Field Training Officer for several weeks, then you will become a police officer and be on your own. It is a very extensive application service, and it should be considering the job that you are applying for. I think that one of the reasons that LA ran into the problems that they did with the Ramparts Scandal was because they loosened some of these guidelines so that they could get new people in fast.

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