

Dennis Cooley, ed.**Re-imagining Policing in Canada.**

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Critical policing research is undergoing great changes and policing research in Canada is in healthy form. One of the main tensions in this field — exemplified if not explicitly addressed in Dennis Cooley's edited volume *Re-Imagining Policing in Canada* — may be read in the nexus between technocentric and normative understandings of how the future of policing is being worked out. This book's contributory essays may be read in one sense and with some trepidation as an iteration or excursus of the division of the field between Clifford Shearing and Richard Ericson. Ericson's view of how policing is being worked out privileges technological adaptations in distributions of information in the risk society, while Shearing, in a self-described normative phase, returns policing to the problem of governance as a collective or common enterprise. In Cooley's edited volume, it is the adaptations to policing (multilateralization, privatization) as an instance of the changing face of governance which occupies contributors' attention.

Is there is a model which elegantly clarifies and designates, justly allocates and stimulates the provision of security services as an admixture of private and public, state and corporate, local, national and transnational authority and delivery? In *Re-imagining Policing* a number of authors tackle the question of just how networks of policing may be reified in, for instance, *policing* rather *police* services boards (e.g., chapter 1, Hermer et. al). Stemming in part from Law Commission of Canada's *In Search of Security* conference in Montreal in 2003, the opening paper elaborates on Shearing's idea that local security may be multilateral and yet responsive to community and legal norms.

Authors in the book also appear to agree that the challenge is the re-invigoration of democracy, rights, fairness and access. The account of multilateral policing of 'urban entertainment destinations' by Heuy, Ericson and Haggerty (chapter 3) and of 'community governance' under the auspices of a Downtown Eastside (DTES) agreement by Mopas (chapter 2) demonstrate the character of the drift from state dominated to multilateral policing. As indicated in Mopas' description of the conflicts over use of space between a variety of residents and transients, the idea of rights to access and equal voice must be settled in the fact between different and sometimes competitive interests and views. Citing Blomley and Sommers, Mopas notes that how the DTES is mapped to effect the respective capacities and interests of neighbourhood constituencies. These boundary designations are then exploited to enable if not legally empower private security and voluntary and business organizations to effect differential access. Social services to drug users and homeless are uses of space resisted by business groups: they wish not to feed but exclude the beast. Mopas concludes by suggesting that 'governing by community' requires re-conception of how power is exercised.

The chapter by Huey, Ericson and Haggerty develops 'image-oriented policing' — of which 'broken windows' is a variety. In 'image-oriented policing' exclusion is 'based largely on surface appearances, including appearing to possess the means to consume' (p. 195). In assessing the policing of 'fantasy city' or the ordering of 'urban entertainment districts' these authors also note

how policing is commodified and tuned to the objective of creating hygienic spaces for consumption. The hypothesis may be challenged: are these urban entertainment districts employing tactics which *inefficiently* mark their profit-maximizing interests by applying a weak (i.e., surface) measure of consumption potential? If not — if there is a fairly strong connection between looks and economic behaviour, and moreover if looks are only important inasmuch as they provide a measure of economic behaviour — then exclusion *is based* on consumption, and appearance is still a reflection of basic reality that has progressed no further than Baudrillard's first stage (image reflection of basic reality).

Murphy and Clarke (chapter 4) compare Edmonton and Halifax, two cities chosen because they have taken different approaches to the governance of policing and security services. In Halifax, as Murphy and Clarke document, police have responded to increased demand for services by 'cutting, limiting or sharing police services,' leaving a core of 'serious crime, emergency or crisis policing' and users of police services looking elsewhere for property or personal protection. In the meantime private and community security services are not centrally 'networked or coordinated'. The Edmonton Police Service, in contrast, has done just that, and has been able to maintain a broad policing and security mandate as a consequence of integrating community and private security under the auspices of EPS-led governance. Interestingly, Murphy and Clarke argue that it was where neoliberalism has been most actively pursued by government (Alberta) that government has been able to be a 'dominant and aggressive player in the governance and delivery of security and policing.' Conversely, it is where there has been a *laissez faire* response to the new public management, etc., that market influences have been more pronounced in this field.

Rigakos (chapter 5) provides a 'labour-based' typology of policing inclusive of both the private and public sector. Thus, policing is 'polemic,' 'sentry-dataveillant,' 'investigative,' 'patrol,' and 'civic-sumptuary.' Perhaps policing is better seen as one of these types than as public or private, common or exclusive. However, the post-Marxist interpretation would still hinge on whether the big state, big capital or big fascism (state-corporate synchronicity) represents a greater perceived threat (i.e., what constitutes the subjects and objects of policing relations).

While one would like to show that the growth of private security and the decline of public police per population represents a need to rethink the public-private distinction, that rethinking will need to incorporate the significance of a leaner, meaner disposition of governance. Post-9-11 there has been a resurgence of publicly-funded security for, in the main, public police. As Cooley notes in the editor's introduction: 'The net effect of 11 September may be a growth in both public police and private security services and the development of denser and more complex networks of relationships between the two' (p.11). Indeed, even without such stimulation (9-11), Malcolm Feeley (2002) has investigated the record of privatization in the corrections context and found it to be in accord with the expansion of 'social control'.

For those following the view of the normative multilateralists (multi-sector participation in the administration of security), what is on offer is not a new purchase on social control but a new form of community security governance. The solution requires legal recognition that communal spaces will be regulated by a melange or network of security services. To others, such as this observer, the ordering problem is very often precisely *that* communal spaces, and increasingly every space, is already regulated by a hybrid or mobile bubble of security services. Recently in New Orleans (not Canada, but not far from the neoliberal horizon) the panoply of public and private, local, state and

federal, paid and voluntary services created a soup almost as thick as the water in the streets.

This raises the possibility that the question of how think about emergent public spaces may not be best approached within the confines of policing literature and research alone. It is essentially a larger question of politics. It involves how *interests* are indeed shaping the nature both of local and global spaces. Once one frames this as a problem of policing rather than a problem of governance or once one subsumes the question of governance within the range of policing questions, there is undue restriction on the nature of the answers one finds.

If security is a communal good rather than a public good and new arrangements need to be made to ensure that the communal good is carried out according to fairness, equality, and various rights of access and use, the standard which is used is that which has been elaborated under the rule of law. There is no doubt that security has been experiencing further or re-emergent privatizing, commercializing and commodifying of late and that this has exacerbated the 'democracy gap' which Eng (in the concluding chapter) describes. But in responding to this with a re-assertion of legal principles, the primary responsibility of security work will not be to the 'the community' but rather 'the social', particularly that 'social' elaborated in rule of law, in democracy building, etc. This then is a recognition that the new reality is more like the old reality: policing provision in Canada and elsewhere requires the re-assertion of policing as a public good.

For many policing specialists, this book represents in many ways the state of the art: the divisions exemplified in these essays reflect the tension between a more technocentric and normative view of policing and the impossibility of reconciling this tension. For policymakers, especially those keen on expanding the purview of private policing delivery, the book will suggest useful strategies to gain political favour. The book does attempt to re-imagine policing by moving beyond the binary public-private distinction. However, given the slippage between a technocentric realism and neoliberal normativity, it will be no surprise that the commodity or deliverable of policing services will increasingly be a site of contestation in which classical liberal values will be junior partners to market (and monopoly) 'efficiencies', yielding increasingly unpalatable security governance experiments more or less in the image of 'one big police force'.

References:

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Willem de Lint

Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology

University of Windsor

delint@uwindsor.ca

Willem de Lint is an associate professor in criminology currently working on intelligence and security. He is conducting an SSHRCC funded study on criminal intelligence units, on the policing of labour, and completing journal articles on security. He has also been a background research report writer for the Ipperwash inquiry.

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