

Law Enforcement Ethics

CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

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Los Angeles | London | New Delhi Singapore | Washington DC

FOR INFORMATION:

SAGE Publications, Inc. 2455 Teller Road Thousand Oaks, California 91320 E-mail: order@sagepub.com

SAGE Publications Ltd. 1 Oliver's Yard 55 City Road London EC1Y 1SP United Kingdom

SAGE Publications India Pvt. Ltd. B 1/I 1 Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area Mathura Road, New Delhi 110 044 India

SAGE Publications Asia-Pacific Pte. Ltd. 3 Church Street #10-04 Samsung Hub Singapore 049483

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Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Fitch, Brian D.

Law enforcement ethics: classic and contemporary issues / Brian D. Fitch.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-4522-5817-1 (pbk.)

1. Law enforcement—Moral and ethical aspects—United States. 2. Police ethics—United States. 3. Police misconduct—United States. 4. Police training—Moral and ethical aspects—United States. I. Title.

HV7924.F576 2014 174'.936323-dc23

2012041595

This book is printed on acid-free paper.



13 14 15 16 17 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Preface

n the United States, as well as in other democratic societies, police officers are accorded an extraordinary set of powers and responsibilities available to few others (Chappel & Piquero, 2004; Kappeler, Sluder, & Alpert, 1998). Police officers have the power to search and seize personal property, to detain and make arrests, and to apply varying levels of coercive force, up to and including deadly force, in the pursuit of their legal mandates. While police officers may have considerably more authority and, by extension, more opportunities to abuse that authority, there is no evidence to suggest that law enforcement professionals are any better equipped than the general public to make moral decisions (Cohen & Feldberg, 1991). Moreover, evidence suggests that law enforcement professionals are not necessarily any less likely to commit criminal offenses than the average citizen—findings that are further complicated by the fact that police officers are, for the most part, free to come and go with little, if any, oversight or supervision (Kappeler et al., 1998).

Nonetheless, society has tremendous expectations of law enforcement and very low tolerance for unethical behavior (Boles, 1995). Officers are expected to adhere to a strict and unwavering code of ethics and to conduct themselves accordingly at all times, both on and off duty. As a result, law enforcement agencies face serious implications when unethical behavior or criminal activities are exposed, including damaged public trust, jeopardized criminal investigations, and costly, often unnecessary, litigation (Dunn & Caceres, 2010; Kappeler et al., 1998). Nonetheless, it seems that one does not have to look very far these days to find myriad examples of police misconduct, corruption, and abuse in the media. Rodney King, Abner Louima, Antoinette Frank, and, most recently, Kelly Thomas—a schizophrenic homeless man who was bludgeoned to death with the butt of a Taser at a bus stop in the city of Fullerton, California—have become household names.

Indeed, the harm caused by the increasing number of high-profile cases of abuse, misconduct, and corruption may be responsible for the growing number of internal affairs units found in many large law enforcement agencies, whose role it is to investigate citizen complaints, as well as potential

violations of department rules identified by supervisors (Cohen & Feldberg, 1991). While there is a lack of data regarding the scope of law enforcement misconduct, it is likely that virtually every police agency has witnessed some form of corruption, abuse, or scandal (McCafferty, Sourynal, & McCafferty, 1998). Although scholars, educators, and practitioners often disagree on the precise mix of factors responsible for misconduct, it is probably safe to assume that law enforcement corruption and abuse are influenced by a number of individual, collective, contextual, and organizational variables, some of which are more difficult to study and address than others. This collection of essays is the result of the collaborative efforts of a diverse taskforce with a vested interest in law enforcement ethics. The contributors represent practitioners from local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies; faculty from university departments, including criminal justice, political science, psychology, sociology, medicine, and law; professional oversight bodies; and centers devoted to the study and teaching of ethics.

This volume comprises 18 chapters, organized around four broad categories, Part I, Ethical Foundations, contains five chapters. In Chapter 1, I. J. Klaver provides an overview of law enforcement ethics. The author explores the individual, organizational, and environmental factors that may contribute to law enforcement misconduct. The issues of organizational structure, departmental policies and procedures, social influences, and organizational culture and their relationships to misconduct are also considered. Chapter 2 highlights the need for proper psychological screening of law enforcement applicants. Ana Gamez and Gary Collins discuss the importance of a partnership between the evaluating psychologists and agency management in selecting potential law enforcement candidates. Chapter 3, presented by Brian D. Fitch, Christine H. Jones, and Luann P. Pannell, argues for a new model of law enforcement ethics training. This includes a discussion of many of the problems associated with traditional lecture-based models of instruction, as well as strategies for incorporating the latest findings from the field of adult education to enhance learning, memory, and retention. In Chapter 4, Brian D. Fitch, Randy B. Means, and Gregory Seidel investigate the management of police ethics. The authors outline the need for clear policy, effective supervision, and proper consequences in influencing officer behavior. The final chapter is this section considers issues of policy, supervision, and oversight in the United Kingdom's 43 police services. Attilio R. Grandani discusses the minimum international standards affecting the United Kingdom's statutes and structures, Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act 1984, inspections, audits, and the current complaint system.

Part II, Ethical Perspectives, is composed of five chapters. In Chapter 6, Theron L. Bowman and Daniel T. Primozic offer a forensic examination of the "will" by charting the internal pathology of morality and irrationality. This includes a study of the classic philosophical arguments presented by Aristotle, as well as those offered by Robert J. Steinberg, as a strategy for attenuating police misconduct. Chapter 7 confronts the ways officers' values, beliefs, and behaviors are influenced by social learning, including beliefs

about misconduct. Brian D. Fitch and Christine H. Jones discuss the essential propositions of social learning theory, as well as how these tenets function as a general theory of police misconduct. In Chapter 8, Aaron D. Conley and Bryon G. Gustafson address fundamental questions about group failings and organizational and institutional responses to those failures. This includes questions about how standards of behavior come to be and what law enforcement organizations should do when institutional standards are violated. Chapter 9, written by Paul T. Zipper and Tina Adams, presents the psychology of marginality. The authors investigate the emotional, psychological, and organizational causes of marginality, while highlighting the importance of early intervention by management and mental health professionals in addressing marginal behavior in all its forms. Chapter 10 outlines the need for greater awareness of the causes, symptoms, and treatment of PTSD among members of the law enforcement community. Amir Hamidi and Patrick Koga examine the symptoms and onset of PTSD, including the neurophysiological correlates of PTSD, biological responses to fear, and subclinical PTSD. The chapter also includes an investigation of current treatments available for PTSD, including cognitive processing therapy (CPT) and mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR).

Part III, Ethical Professionalism, presents four chapters. In Chapter 11, Kevin A. Elliott and Jocelyn M. Pollock take an in-depth look at the ethics of force. This includes an examination of pertinent case law, policy, and training, as well as the damage to public trust caused by highly publicized incidents. Chapter 12 focuses on the use of trickery and deceit in criminal interrogations. James L. Ruffin explores the effects of case law-more specifically, the U.S. Supreme Court case of Miranda v. Arizona (1966) on interrogation practices, as well as arguments commonly found in the courts, social sciences, and philosophy. The chapter includes a discussion on the emergence of Investigative Interviewing in the United Kingdom and other democratic nations, while concluding with an overview of research on the attitudes of American police officers toward the use of trickery and deceit. Chapter 13, authored by Alexandro Villanueva, explores the question of why law enforcement officers cheat in a variety of settings, including promotional exams. The chapter offers a typology of cheating and a brief theoretical background of the civil service system, and concludes with recommendations to address cheating, while creating more fair and equitable standards throughout the promotional process. In Chapter 14, Bernard E. Harcourt confronts the problem of racial profiling among American law enforcement agencies by examining the arrest of Henry Louis Gates Jr. and the rationale behind racial profiling. He further offers strategies to combat this phenomenon while increasing the overall effectiveness of law enforcement.

Part IV, Ethical Challenges, features four chapters on emerging issues facing today's law enforcement leaders. Chapter 15 looks at how leadership, ethics, professionalism, and accountability have assumed prominent roles in academic, government, and public discourse since the events of 9/11.

Presented by Kelly W. Sundberg, this chapter focuses on the increasing importance of professionalism and ethical policing, especially among federal agencies, while outlining many of the challenges associated with recruiting highly skilled officers capable of adapting to diverse new political mandates. In Chapter 16, Cyndi Banks takes a penetrating look at the concept of democratic policing in three developing nations: The Philippines, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. Topics of discussion include the ways norms affect "best practices," how local policing customs continue to survive into the postcolonial period, and challenges associated with transforming current models into modern democratic policing practices. Chapter 17 discusses the destructive consequences of off-duty misconduct to officers, their agencies, and the public at large. The author, David Massey, explores the implications of stress, culture, and other factors associated with misconduct, as well as offers suggestions about what leaders can do to proactively address the problem in our modern, media-driven age. Chapter 18, written by Jarret Lovell, explores the impact of citizen journalism and social media on contemporary policing. The author outlines the ways changes in media technology bring new information about police practices to the public sphere, often leading to strategic and organizational change. This includes a discussion of how contemporary law enforcement must learn to work with citizen journalists, while recognizing the technology of social media as a positive force for enhanced police professionalism and accountability.

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