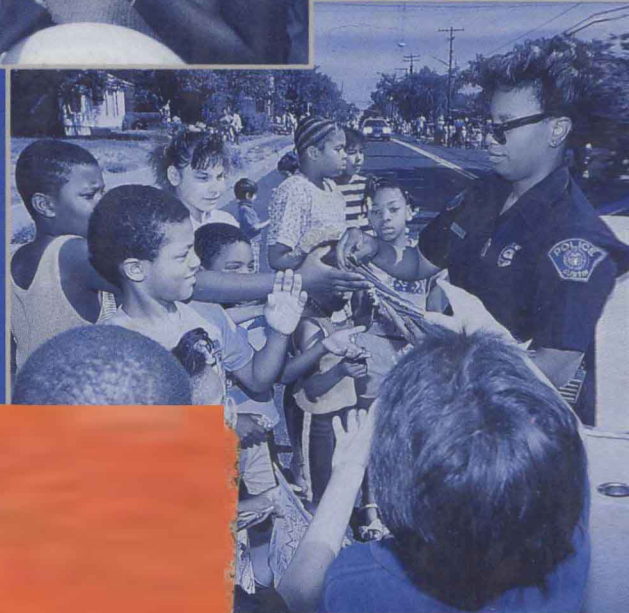


# POLICE & SOCIETY



Roy R. Roberg  
Jack Kuykendall

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**Roy R. Roberg**

**Jack Kuykendall**

*San Jose State University*

**Wadsworth Publishing Company**

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For  
Arlene, Mary, Alyssa, and Casey

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## Preface

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*Police and Society* provides a comprehensive introduction to policing in the United States. It is both descriptive and analytical in nature, discussing historical perspectives and current knowledge regarding the process of policing, police behavior, and organization and operations. Contemporary issues and future prospects are also addressed. Throughout the text, an emphasis is placed on describing the relationship between the police and the community and how this relationship has changed through the years. The impact of this change on current police practices, especially with respect to community policing, is explored.

To adequately explain the complex nature of police operations in a democracy, we have attempted to integrate the most important theoretical foundations, research findings, and contemporary practices in a comprehensible, yet analytic, manner. In this regard, the text is extensively referenced with citations regarding the police and provides the background for understanding how the police currently operate, how they are changing, and what the future may hold. To make the book more readily applicable to the reader, numerous offsets depicting police leaders, police “street-work,” and critical research findings have been added. These include “Biographical Sketches,” where brief descriptions of the contributions of important law enforcement leaders or interviews with contemporary police executives are provided; “Inside Policing,” which provides brief descriptions of real-world police issues and operations; and “Research Highlights,” which present excerpts from some of the more important studies over the last two to three decades.

With this background, *Police and Society* is primarily designed for college students taking their first class on the police; however, due to its comprehensive coverage, it may also be useful in more specialized courses on the police, including organization and management, issues in policing, police–community relations, or possibly graduate courses dealing with the process of policing. Of course, we also hope that interested citizens and

police practitioners will find the book both thought-provoking and useful, especially from a policy analysis perspective.

The text is organized into five major areas, including the democratic process of policing, organization and professional development, police behavior and control, police operations, and contemporary issues and the future.

We would like to thank and send our sincere appreciation to the staff at Brooks/Cole who put the manuscript into production. Cindy Stormer, our editor, and Cat Collins, our editorial associate, deserve special recognition for their involvement, encouragement, and guidance.

Several significant changes have been implemented in the final form of the text, thanks to the helpful comments and suggestions of these reviewers: Thomas Baker, University of Scranton; Scott Decker, University of Missouri–St. Louis; Holly Dershem, Dawson Community College; Dave Falcone, Illinois State University; Jack Greene, Temple University; Lynette Lee-Sammons, California State University at Sacramento. We would like to send a special thanks to them as well.

*Roy R. Roberg*  
*Jack Kuykendall*

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PART ONE

# The Democratic Process of Policing





# Process of Policing

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Why do the police exist? What do they do? What are their problems? How have they changed? This book attempts to answer these and related questions about police in the United States. Throughout this chapter and the book, the terms *police* and *law enforcement* will be used interchangeably. Actually, police do more than enforce the law, but the two terms are generally used to mean the same thing.

This book is an introduction to the police in the United States. It does not have a central theme or guiding theoretical framework. Rather, the primary purpose is to present, in a systematic fashion, as many insights and as much information as possible. In this regard, we emphasize five areas:

1. The process, role, history, and models of policing (chapters 1–3)
2. The organization, management, and professional development of the police (chapters 4 and 5)
3. The behavior and discretion, including the use of coercion, of police officers and the methods of controlling police behavior (chapters 6–8)
4. The selection and training of officers, and police operations (chapters 9 and 10)
5. Selected contemporary issues, including the future of policing (chapters 11–14)

Most chapters contain one or more series of boxes called “Biographical Sketches,” “Inside Policing,” and “Research Highlights.” The “Biographical Sketches” include either brief descriptions of the careers and contributions of important historical and contemporary persons in law enforcement or interviews with police executives. The “Inside Policing” boxes provide brief descriptions of real-world police issues—for example, police

corruption and the use of force. The “Research Highlights” present excerpts from important research studies of the last two or three decades. These boxes are intended to add realism and enhance an understanding of the complex issues confronting modern-day policing.

## THE POLICE CONCEPT IN A DEMOCRACY

The word *police* derives from the Greek words *politeuein*, which means “to be a citizen or engage in political activity,” and *polis*, which means “city” or “state.” These definitions emphasize the importance of the individual or citizen, the political process, and the state or government. How are individuals to be governed? How are the citizens of a society to be treated by the representatives of government, which include the police? The answers to these questions are determined by the values society places on how much freedom should be given to individual citizens and how much power should be given to government. All governments are vested with **police power** to regulate matters of health, welfare, safety, and morality. This is necessary because a society requires both structure and order if it is to be effective in meeting the safety, economic, and social needs of its members. Governments must have police power to establish laws governing the conduct and behavior of the individual and to establish and enforce rules concerning relationships with other societies, between internal political subdivisions or units such as states, counties, and cities, and between groups and individuals. One important expression of the police power in a society is the police organization and its officers and the manner in which the police function, behave, and make decisions.

There are different forms of government that a society can adopt. One of the most important distinguishing characteristics of government is the manner in which laws (and public policies) are developed and enforced. At one extreme, there are **totalitarian governments** in which the power of government is exercised by only one person (e.g., a dictator), a small number of individuals, or one political party. Generally, the laws and policies that are established are intended to maintain the interests of those in power and the social order at the expense of individual freedom. At the other extreme are **democratic governments**, which are based on the idea of “participation of the governed.” This means that the members of a democratic society either directly participate in deciding the laws and methods of their enforcement or they elect representatives who make such decisions for them.

How do governments make decisions? This is determined by the political system of government. In the United States, we have a republican form of government that is decentralized (e.g., federal, state, and local units of government) to allow more people to become involved in the political system and to limit the political power held by those individuals we elect to



political office. Another important organizational feature of our government involves a separation of powers, which results in three branches of government: the executive, judicial, and legislative. This separation exists to provide a checks-and-balances system so that one branch of government will not become too powerful.

Being political—that is, active in the political system—means becoming involved in attempting to influence how government resources, such as money, technology, employees and their knowledge and skills, are used and what laws and policies are to be developed to guide government decision making (e.g., what “use of force” policy will be established in a police department). Important political decisions may result from a consensus that is developed as a result of a discussion and debate, or decisions may result from a compromise or bargain between two or more competing groups in conflict, such as the Republican and Democratic parties compromising on a crime-control bill. In some circumstances, when one group has more political influence, it can actually impose its ideas about laws and public policy on other groups. Individuals who view democracy from a *pluralistic* perspective would argue that debates, bargains, and compromises are keys to the development of laws and public policy. This theory suggests that many different interests and groups compose a society but no one group dominates. However, another conception of how democracy works is referred to as *elite* or *class theory*. This theory holds that only a small number of people, usually the upper classes who are often the most wealthy individuals, have real influence in the political process (Linberry, Edwards, and Wattenberg, 1991).

Democratic forms of government are usually committed to both the principles of majority rule and minority rights. **Majority rule** means that the will of the majority (of those individuals who participate in the political process) should determine how resources are to be used and what laws and policies should guide government activity. But this majority should not be allowed to become a form of tyranny; consequently, democratic forms of government tend to identify certain rights that all people have regardless of what the majority may prefer. Of course, this **minority rights** principle has often been violated in the United States. We have a long history of tyrannical, or discriminatory, behavior by the “majority,” particularly against religious and ethnic minorities and women.

Democratic concerns about the rights and freedoms to be given to individuals, including those considered to be a minority, and the limits to be placed on government’s use of the police power are usually addressed by creating what is called a constitution. Constitutions may be either written or unwritten, but they serve the same basic purpose: *to establish the nature and character of government by identifying the basic principles on which that government is to be based*. Written constitutions may be created by a combination of traditional practices, documents, and statutes or laws, as in England, or there may be a specific written document, as in