

***The Police in America - An Introduction 2025
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Correct answers located at the end of the chapter.

TRUE/FALSE - Write 'T' if the statement is true and 'F' if the statement is false.

- 1) Police in totalitarian societies are governed by the rule of law.
☐ true
☐ false
- 2) A basic strategy for holding individual officers and departments accountable for their use of force is the collection and analysis of data on use-of-force incidents.
☐ true
☐ false
- 3) In the context of policing, unconscious bias involves acting on the basis of deeply embedded stereotypes about racial or ethnic groups.
☐ true
☐ false
- 4) One frequent criticism of the police, especially in the case of officer-involved shootings, is that departmental internal investigations are often biased toward the officer being investigated.
☐ true
☐ false
- 5) Most police work can be described as order maintenance or peacekeeping.
☐ true
☐ false
- 6) Police auditors or inspectors general investigate individual citizen complaints, determine the disposition of the complaint, and make a recommendation to the police chief for action.
☐ true
☐ false
- 7) Procedural justice helps in promoting law-abiding behavior in communities.
☐ true
☐ false
- 8) The crime-fighter image of police officers encourages police officers to adopt de-escalation tactics on a regular basis.
☐ true
☐ false
- 9) "Sweep" arrests, where the police arrest large numbers of gang members, have been found to be effective in controlling gangs and crime.
☐ true
☐ false

10) De-escalation specifically involves a permissive style of policing.

- ☐ true
- ☐ false

11) A crisis intervention team (CIT) training can be seen as a form of problem-oriented policing.

- ☐ true
- ☐ false

MULTIPLE CHOICE - Choose the one alternative that best completes the statement or answers the question.

12) One of the most enduring myths about policing is that police officers

- A) are crime fighters.
- B) prevent crime.
- C) address society's problems.
- D) use force to achieve their goals.

13) One of the most important issues with regard to police accountability is

- A) preventing crime.
- B) community policing.
- C) the use of force by police officers.
- D) the ability to act as a form of social control.

14) In the context of policing, one of the recommendations made by the President's Task Force is to

- A) increase the number of arrests made per year by 15 percent.
- B) ensure that quotas for the number of traffic tickets are met every year.
- C) promote the warrior mindset rather than the guardian mindset among police officers.
- D) make official policies and procedures publicly available.

15) Identify a true statement about the appointment of police officials in the United States.

- A) Mayors appoint police chiefs.
- B) The president of the United States appoints the head of state police agencies.
- C) The Supreme Court directly appoints the directors of federal law enforcement agencies.
- D) The vice president of the United States appoints county sheriffs.

16) Which of the following is an example of procedural justice?

- A) A police officer gives an offender a traffic ticket for reckless driving.
- B) A police officer explains to a driver why he has to search the driver's car.
- C) A police officer arrests an offender for possessing illegal drugs.
- D) A police officer shows a group of children how to fasten a seat belt in a car during a training session.

17) One police practice that offends the public and undermines the trust and legitimacy of police officers is

- A) the use of semi-automatic pistols in police raids.
- B) the requirement of police officers to make a certain number of arrests per year.
- C) the use of undercover cops in monitoring terrorist activities in the country.
- D) the employment of a higher number of police officers in urban areas than in rural areas.

18) In the context of policing, which of the following statements is true about de-escalation?

- A) It involves an overly lenient style of policing.
- B) It should be used when there is a clear threat of a physical attack on a police officer.
- C) It may avoid unnecessary use-of-force incidents.
- D) It is mostly used by police officers who want to overpower and repress violators.

19) When police officers conduct stops, searches, and arrests based on the race and ethnicity of people, they are most likely violating the _____ of the U.S. Constitution.

- A) Fifth Amendment
- B) Nineteenth Amendment
- C) Fifteenth Amendment
- D) Fourteenth Amendment

20) A police officer regularly arrests people from ethnic minorities in the community regardless of their role in any criminal activity. This is an example of

- A) redlining.
- B) nepotism.
- C) racial profiling.
- D) omission bias.

21) Which of the following statements is true about totalitarian societies?

- A) Police primarily follow the dictates of the supreme ruler.
- B) People have control over law enforcement agencies.
- C) Power is distributed equally among government officials.
- D) People can directly elect government officials.

22) Which of the following statements is true of police officers adopting the "warrior" mindset of policing?

- A) Police officers typically de-escalate encounters to offset the presence of a physical threat in a situation.
- B) Police officers are more likely to take independent decisions.
- C) Police officers actively interact with community members and take a proactive approach to policing.
- D) Police officers tend to view the members of the public as the enemy.

23) Veronica says that the police officer who arrested her for drunk driving did not give her an adequate explanation for detaining and arresting her. She says that the police officer was also impolite in conduct. Which of the following statements is true about this scenario?

- A) Veronica was denied distributive justice.
- B) Veronica was denied procedural justice.
- C) The police officer who arrested her employed racial profiling.
- D) The police officer who arrested her adopted the "guardian" mindset of policing.

24) De-escalation is the least useful when

- A) use of force is unnecessary.
- B) police officers outnumber the violators in an encounter.
- C) there is a clear threat of a physical attack on a police officer.
- D) police officers adopt the military style of policing.

25) Some police officers regularly stop, search, and arrest African Americans more frequently than white Americans.

This is an example of

- A) systematic bias.
- B) the halo effect.
- C) the spotlight effect.
- D) self-serving bias.

- 26) The emphasis on crime fighting creates unrealistic public expectations about the ability of the police to
- A) catch criminals and prevent crime.
 - B) provide successful community policing.
 - C) correct family problems and prevent domestic violence.
 - D) reduce gang violence in major cities.
- 27) Movies and television shows strengthen the impression that the police are highly successful in solving crimes, when in fact only _____ percent of all reported Index crimes are solved.
- A) 15
 - B) 20
 - C) 25
 - D) 30
- 28) The reality of policing is that the police play an extremely
- A) civil role in society.
 - B) community-oriented role in working with juveniles and former incarcerated people.
 - C) complex role of controlling crime, maintaining order, and providing public services.
 - D) aggressive role in dealing with gangs and drugs.
- 29) As a result of the crime-fighter image of the police, police officers
- A) tend to engage more in de-escalation.
 - B) avoid the use of force in most encounters.
 - C) feel encouraged to adopt a "warrior" mindset.
 - D) tend to conceal use-of-force incident information from the public.
- 30) What is the community policing movement attempting to accomplish?
- A) to reduce the overall crime rate
 - B) to improve neighborhood conditions
 - C) to restore and develop the citizen role as co-producers of police services
 - D) to improve satisfaction with police services by reducing the response time to calls for service
- 31) What does our political system ensure where the police are concerned?
- A) policing power and authority
 - B) accountability to the public and to the law
 - C) enforcement of federal immigration laws
 - D) the prosecution of the arrests made by the police

32) Herman Goldstein developed POP. This stands for

- A) police operations procedure.
- B) pals of police.
- C) problems of policing.
- D) problem-oriented policing.

33) Which of the following statements is true about problem-oriented policing?

- A) It is the least popular form of policing.
- B) It involves aggregating multiple problems into a single problem.
- C) It represents a proactive approach to responding to crime and disorder.
- D) It is ineffective in identifying recurring problems.

34) What percentage of all Index crimes are cleared or solved?

- A) 20 percent
- B) 30 percent
- C) 40 percent
- D) 60 percent

35) Reporting data from a major study of police services shows that _____ percent of the total calls for police services involved a violent crime.

- A) 20
- B) 15
- C) 10
- D) 2

36) Herman Goldstein developed the concept of

- A) community policing.
- B) team policing.
- C) problem-oriented policing.
- D) police-community relations.

37) In the case of controversial officer-involved shooting incidents or excessive-force cases, admitting mistakes and explaining what actions a department is taking

- A) damages police–community relationships.
- B) undermines trust and confidence in the police.
- C) tends to legitimize law enforcement agencies.
- D) tends to aggravate race relations.

38) The Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) is a type of

- A) community policing.
- B) team policing.
- C) problem-oriented policing.
- D) police-community relations.

39) Which of the following types of media are responsible for perpetuating the myth of police officers as crime fighters?

- A) the movies
- B) television programs
- C) the news media
- D) All of these answers are correct.

- 40) According to Egon Bittner, the defining feature of policing is the power to
- A) stop and detain people on the street.
 - B) use coercive force.
 - C) collect personal data.
 - D) conduct a frisk or a search.

- 44) What is respectful policing, and how does it affect the accountability and legitimacy of the actions of police officers?

ESSAY. Write your answer in the space provided or on a separate sheet of paper.

- 41) What are the ways in which police officers can build accountability for their actions in their community?

- 45) What is crisis intervention team (CIT) training?

- 42) How can police officers maintain accountability for their actions?

- 46) How can evidence-based programs aid policing?

- 43) How can openness and transparency help police officers build trust and legitimacy?

- 47) Write a general essay on the concept of problem-oriented policing, making sure to mention its author and its basic principles and functions.

Answer Key

Test name: Chapter 01

- 1) FALSE
- 2) TRUE
- 3) TRUE
- 4) TRUE
- 5) TRUE
- 6) FALSE
- 7) TRUE
- 8) FALSE
- 9) FALSE
- 10) FALSE
- 11) TRUE
- 12) A
- 13) A
- 14) D
- 15) A
- 16) B
- 17) B
- 18) C
- 19) D
- 20) C
- 21) A
- 22) D
- 23) B
- 24) C
- 25) A
- 26) A
- 27) B
- 28) C
- 29) C
- 30) C
- 31) B
- 32) D
- 33) C
- 34) A
- 35) D
- 36) C
- 37) C

- 38) A
- 39) D
- 40) B
- 41) Essay
- 42) Essay
- 43) Essay
- 44) Essay
- 45) Essay
- 46) Essay
- 47) Essay

Chapter 1

Police and Society

Chapter Objectives

After reading this chapter, students should be able to accomplish the objectives given below.

1. Explain “why do we have police.”
2. Describe the framework for understanding the police and policing.
3. Discuss how police can build legitimacy with the public.
4. Explain the need for an open and transparent police.
5. Describe the various ways in which police can be held accountable for their actions.
6. Describe strategies for effective policing.

Brief Chapter Outline

The Goals of this Book

- I. Why Do We Have Police?
- II. A Framework for Understanding the Police and Policing
- III. A Democratic Police
 - A. Democracy and Accountability
- IV. A Legitimate Police
 - A. Procedural Justice
 - B. Practices That Build Legitimacy
 - C. Legitimacy and Police–Public Interactions
 - D. Legitimacy, Trust, and Race and Ethnic Relations

- V. An Open and Transparent Police
 - A. Practices That Create Openness and Transparency
- VI. An Accountable Police
 - A. Police Accountability: Goals and Methods
 - B. Accountability on Police Use of Force
 - C. Collecting and Analyzing Data on Use of Force
 - D. Accountability in Routine Police–Public Contacts
 - E. Training to Prevent Bias in Police Activities
 - F. Independent Investigations and Review of Critical Incidents
- VII. An Effective Police
 - A. The Complex Responsibilities of the Police
 - B. Ineffective Strategies for Controlling Crime and Disorder
 - C. Effective Strategies for Controlling Crime and Disorder
 - D. Partnerships with the Public
 - E. A Special Case: The Police and the Mentally Ill
 - F. Research and Policing: Evidence-Based Programs

Chapter Summary

Now that students have examined the main features of the framework for understanding the police, it is important to put all the pieces together. Throughout the chapter it is explained how the elements of the framework relate to each other. To put it all together, it is helpful to begin with the last part of the chapter's discussion. People want an *effective* police. As the authors have pointed out, to be effective in fighting crime, the police need community cooperation. That cooperation, however, does not come automatically. People are more likely to cooperate if they regard the police as *legitimate*. People, moreover, are more likely to regard the police as legitimate if the police department is *open and transparent*. They are also more likely to regard the police as legitimate if the police are *accountable* with respect to controlling the use of force

and disciplining officers who violate the law or department policies.

The framework discussed in this chapter is a comprehensive approach to policing. The police cannot have one of these elements of the framework without the others. And each element depends on the others. Each of these framework elements will be discussed throughout *The Police in America*.

Key Terms

- President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (p. 4)
- Democracy and the police (p. 5)
- Legitimacy (p. 7)
- Procedural justice (p. 7)
- Respectful policing (p. 9)
- Openness and transparency (p. 11)
- Accountability (p. 12)
- Policies on the use of force (p. 14)
- De-escalation (p. 14)
- Systematic bias (p. 16)
- Unconscious bias (p. 17)
- Citizen oversight (p. 18)
- Complex responsibilities of the police (p. 19)
- Crime-fighter image (p. 19)
- Problem-oriented policing (p. 21)

Internet Exercises

1. Visit the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing website at <http://www.popcenter.org/>. Click on the tab "POP Guides." Find a guide that covers an issue in which you are interested. Review the guide quickly. Do the recommendations in the guide make sense to you? If so, why? If not, why not?
2. Many police departments have adopted de-escalation policies. Search for five police departments on the Internet, and first find if they place their policy manuals on their websites (often found under "About Us" or "Reports"). If they do, see if they have a de-escalation policy. Most such policies are included under the topic "Use of Force," but some may have them listed separately under "De-escalation." Rate the five departments in terms of openness and transparency on three points: (a) the policy manual is/is not on the

website; (b) the department does/does not have a de-escalation policy; and (c) the department's website is/is not easy to use.

Lecture Notes from Professors Walker and Katz

I. Why Do We Have Police?

Most Americans think they know what the police are: They are the officers who patrol the street where they live. The police have multiple responsibilities, which are divided into three main areas: controlling crime, maintaining order, and providing services to the public. Even the idea of “fighting crime” is complex. For example, should the police make arrests in every single case, including very minor ones such as a minor in possession of beer? The police solve this dilemma by using their discretion not to enforce all the laws all the time. The task of maintaining order is just as complex. Finally, it is difficult to define the kind of organization that a police department or law enforcement agency represents.

II. A Framework for Understanding the Police and Policing

The issues surrounding policing are extremely complex. To make sense of them, the author uses the 2015 report of the **President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing** as a useful framework for understanding the basic principles of good policing. The Task Force's framework addressed the following issues: a democratic police, a legitimate police, an open and transparent police, an accountable police, and an effective police.

III. A Democratic Police

Democracy and the police means that the police are both answerable to the people and accountable to the rule of law. Making sure that the police are responsive to the public but are not used for improper purposes is a major challenge for the American police. The President's Task Force made a number of recommendations to ensure that the police are responsive to the people they serve.

A. Democracy and Accountability

Public control of the police has its dangers, however, and there have been many instances in American history when those dangers became tragic realities.

IV. A Legitimate Police

Legitimacy means more than just the police following the rule of law. It means that the people they serve have trust and confidence in them: trust that comes from respectful treatment; trust that the police are conducting themselves in a lawful manner; and confidence that they are

controlling crime and disorder effectively.

A. Procedural Justice

Procedural justice is now recognized as an essential guiding principle for good policing. It holds that, for example, in dealing with an organization, people are concerned not just with what happens to them but also with how they are treated. In policing, this means the difference between getting a traffic ticket (the substantive outcome) and how the officer acted: for example, being rude, being polite, not answering the person's questions, not explaining the reason for the stop, and so on. Research consistently finds that people notice how they are treated by police officers and that it makes a difference to them.

B. Practices That Build Legitimacy

There are many ways in which the police can build trust and legitimacy. The President's Task Force recommended that "[i]n order to achieve external legitimacy, law enforcement agencies should involve the community in the process of developing and evaluating policies and procedures" (Action Item 1.5.1). If people do not feel that their police departments have a sound policy for handling domestic violence incidents, for example, there should be opportunities for them to voice their concerns to the department. The effectiveness of community meetings, of course, depends on how they are conducted. If they are completely controlled by police officials in charge of the meeting, with only limited opportunity for members of the public to voice their concerns, then they will likely be counterproductive.

C. Legitimacy and Police–Public Interactions

Respectful policing includes the police introducing themselves, explaining the reason they are there (the reason for a traffic stop, for example), listening to people, and answering their questions. It is extremely important that police officers speak respectfully to people. Prohibiting offensive language is also an important accountability measure, a means of holding officers to a high standard of performance when dealing with people in the community. One police practice that offends the public and undermines trust and legitimacy involves formal or informal department quotas that require officers to write a certain number of traffic tickets or make a certain number of arrests each month or year.

D. Legitimacy, Trust, and Race and Ethnic Relations

Building trust and legitimacy requires that a police department have a workforce that is representative of the community, in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender. Maintaining a representative police force is a continuing challenge. Another issue that undermines trust and confidence in the police is that, historically, police departments refused to admit that they

made mistakes, particularly in the case of controversial officer-involved shooting incidents or excessive-force cases. In short, admitting mistakes and explaining what actions a department is taking can pay dividends in terms of legitimacy.

V. An Open and Transparent Police

Openness and transparency involves the police explaining to the public what they do and how they handle certain critical situations, such as domestic violence incidents. One way to accomplish this is for police departments to make their policies available to the public.

A. Practices That Create Openness and Transparency

Making department policies available contributes to public understanding of the police and helps to build legitimacy. Involving members of the community in the development of new policies and the revision of existing policies also enhances public understanding, provides an opportunity for the revised policies to address community concerns, and gives the community a sense of ownership in the resulting policies. The composition of a police force is extremely relevant to trust and legitimacy. Making data available about the composition of the police force is also an accountability issue.

VI. An Accountable Police

A. Police Accountability: Goals and Methods

The police should be accountable to both the public and to the law for their operations. **Accountability** is one of the basic elements of a democratic police. There is no single way of achieving police accountability. Much controversy exists over the best means of accountability.

B. Accountability on Police Use of Force

The use of force by police officers is a critically important issue with regard to accountability. First, the police have extraordinary powers: the power to stop and detain people on the street; the power to conduct a frisk or a search; the power to arrest; and, finally, the ultimate power to take someone's life. In short, police department **policies on the use of force** need to cover when and in what circumstances officers are authorized to use force, including both deadly force and physical force; training that ensures all officers know their department's use-of-force policy; procedures for thoroughly and fairly investigating use-of-force incidents to determine whether an officer acted according to the department's policy; and mandatory use-of-force reports to facilitate investigations and to permit the department to identify problems that need to be corrected.

In recent years, the idea of officers de-escalating encounters with people has gained wide acceptance. **De-escalation** does not involve a permissive or overly lenient style of policing. It is a technique that should be used when appropriate (and certainly not when there is a clear threat of a physical attack on an officer) and as an alternative to the officer's escalating an incident and using unnecessary force.

C. Collecting and Analyzing Data on Use of Force

A basic strategy for holding individual officers and departments accountable for their use of force is the collection and analysis of data on use-of-force incidents. With respect to data on other activities, the President's Task Force recommended that law enforcement agencies *"should be encouraged to collect, maintain, and analyze demographic data on all detentions (stops, searches, summons, and arrests)"* (Recommendation 2.0). The President's Task Force also recommended that departments have a policy on the release of information about individual force incidents, and stated that publicly released information should include *"a summary statement regarding the circumstances of the incident by the department as soon as possible and within 24 hours."*

D. Accountability in Routine Police–Public Contacts

Building legitimacy and trust in the police requires that officers conduct themselves in a professional manner in routine contacts with people. A far more serious issue involves patterns of **systematic bias** in routine police law enforcement activities. Systematically stopping, searching, and arresting African Americans has been labeled *racial profiling*. Racial profiling has several adverse consequences. First, stops, searches, and arrests based on race or ethnicity are a violation of the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Second, patterns of biased policing damage police–community relations and seriously damage the legitimacy of the police. Searches of persons is another police activity that needs to be controlled.

E. Training to Prevent Bias in Police Activities

Training is essential if officers are to comply with a department's policy on bias-free policing. Bias, particularly with regard to race and ethnicity, can be unconscious as well as conscious and deliberate. Research, however, has found that **unconscious bias** plays an important role in policing. This involves officers acting on the basis of deeply embedded stereotypes about racial or ethnic groups, involvement in crime, or the perceived "dangerousness" of certain people. An important part of new officer training involves post-academy field training, where a new officer is partnered with a field training officer who provides close monitoring and instruction.

F. Independent Investigations and Review of Critical Incidents

The handling of citizen complaints by police internal affairs units has been a long controversy. There are two basic forms of **citizen oversight** of the police. Complaint review boards investigate individual citizen complaints, determine the disposition of the complaint (sustained, not sustained, or unfounded), and make a recommendation to the police chief for action. Police auditors or inspectors general, by contrast, do not investigate complaints but instead are designed to investigate the policies and practices of the police department for the purpose of identifying problems that exist and recommending improvement.

VII. An Effective Police

A. The Complex Responsibilities of the Police

People want the police to be effective in fulfilling their three major responsibilities: controlling crime, maintaining order, and providing services to the public. First, however, people need to have a good understanding of the **complex responsibilities of the police**, and the nature and complexities of each of the three major areas. The development of effective policing is inhibited by the many myths and stereotypes about police work. The myth of the crime fighter endures for several reasons. The entertainment media, in movies and television police programs, feature crime-related stories because they offer drama, fast-paced action, and violence.

The police perpetuate the **crime-fighter image** themselves. They present themselves to the community as the protectors of public safety. Most important, the crime-fighter image does not represent an accurate picture of the reality of police work. The emphasis on crime fighting prevents people from intelligently evaluating the full scope of police activities. It also creates unrealistic public expectations about the ability of the police to prevent crime and catch criminals.

B. Ineffective Strategies for Controlling Crime and Disorder

The first principle in effective crime control is that the police must *not* engage in tactics and behavior that are illegal, damage their relations with the public, or are simply ineffective. For this reason, the President's Task Force recommended that “[l]aw enforcement agencies should consider the potential damage to public trust when implementing crime fighting strategies” (Recommendation 1.6).

C. Effective Strategies for Controlling Crime and Disorder

Several effective strategies for controlling crime and disorder have emerged in recent years.

Problem-oriented policing (POP) is a widely used program that has been effective in responding to crime and disorder. As developed by Herman Goldstein, POP involves disaggregating the police workload into specific problems (for example, household burglaries, drunk driving, graffiti), identifying recurring problems, developing working partnerships with community groups, and together developing strategies to reduce or eliminate a specific problem. POP represents a proactive approach, which is very different from the reactive approach of simply responding to 911 calls.

D. Partnerships with the Public

Problem-oriented policing involves a new role for the police. Officers function as community organizers, working with community groups, discussing community problems and developing possible responses, and in many cases negotiating with local government service agencies, such as the sanitation department or the parks and recreation department, to obtain better services for the neighborhood. Involving community groups as partners pays several dividends. First, neighborhood residents know a lot about conditions in the area. Second, community partnerships give neighborhood residents a sense of ownership in the strategy that is chosen, and a commitment to help make it work. Third, this approach greatly enhances the legitimacy of the police, which pays dividends in many other ways.

Community residents play a vital role in (a) reporting crimes to the police; (b) notifying the police about neighborhood problems (for example, open drug dealing on certain street corners or in certain houses, graffiti on certain blocks); (c) being witnesses in criminal cases; and (d) participating in police-sponsored anticrime programs.

E. A Special Case: The Police and the Mentally Ill

Responding to incidents in which a person is having a mental health crisis has become an increasing part of routine police work. One of the most popular approaches to responding to mental-health-related incidents is with crisis intervention team (CIT) training. CIT programs can take one of two forms. One approach is to have a certain number of officers with specialized CIT training who are available to respond to mental health crisis incidents. An alternative approach is for all officers in the department to receive CIT training.

CIT International explains the crisis intervention approach that is consistent with many of the principles discussed so far. The first core element involves a working partnership among law enforcement, community activists, and mental health professions. The second involves community “ownership” of the program, which includes a major role in planning, implementation of the program, and networking among the various stakeholders. The third core element involves clear and consistent policies and procedures on the proper handling of different kinds of mental-health-related incidents and relationships with social service

agencies.

F. Research and Policing: Evidence-Based Programs

Effective police programs should be based on peer-reviewed scientific evidence of their effectiveness. Evidence-based policymaking is now used in many areas of life, including medical treatment. The President's Task Force recommended that police departments adopt "scientifically supported practices" (Recommendation 2.4). To help develop evidence-based programs and policies, the President's Task Force recommended that police departments *"establish partnerships with academic institutions to develop rigorous training practices, evaluation, and the development of curricula based on evidence-based practices"* (Action Item 5.1.2).