

# The Geographies of Policing

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Yarwood, R (2007) The Geographies of Policing Progress in Human Geography,  
31.4, 447-466 <http://phg.sagepub.com/content/31/4/447.short>

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## Abstract

In 1991 Nicolas Fyfe published a paper in this journal arguing that studies of the police were 'conspicuously absent from the landscapes of human geography' (Fyfe, 1991: 249). This article reviews geographical progress in this area and argues that attention should be shifted from *the police* towards *policing*. Consideration is given to the increasing numbers of agencies that perform policing, including state, private and voluntary actors, as well as 'the police' themselves. Second, critical scrutiny is given to discourses of policing and their potential to exclude particular people from particular spaces. It is argued that the concept of governance provides a suitable framework for theorising new geographies of policing.

## Key Words

Police, policing, governance, geography.

## **I Introduction**

In 1991 Nicholas Fyfe published a seminal paper in this journal arguing that studies of the police were 'conspicuously absent from the landscapes of human geography' (Fyfe, 1991: 249). In the fifteen years that have elapsed since the publication of that article, there have been radical changes in the aims, organisation and provision of policing in many countries. However, interest in this topic remains on the margins of human geography's research agenda. There is still a tendency to focus on the mapping of crime patterns (Monmonier, 2006), the fear of crime (Pain, 2000) or the impacts of legislation (Sibley, 2003), rather than the spatial performance and practice of policing (Herbert, 1997).

A better understanding of policing contributes to a better understanding of the ways in which power shapes space. Commentators are making connections between the growth of punitive, exclusionary policing practices and increasingly wider social divisions found in the urban landscape (Young, 2002; Herbert and Brown, 2006). These changes have been linked to the development of neo-liberal regimes that have transferred the responsibility of policing from the state to an ever wider assortment of public, private and voluntary agencies (Johnston, 2000), raising questions about the way that security is governed. Consequently, more detailed studies of policing have the potential to inform current debates about the spatial nature of governance and its relationship with new modes of regulation (Goodwin, 2006).

An understanding of space also provides important perspectives on policing (Crawford, 2003). As Fyfe (1991) demonstrated, the police use space, organised into divisions and beats, to exert control over people and places. In doing so, geographers have highlighted that the police must strike a difficult balance between operational efficiency and democratic accountability to local populations (Smith, 1986a, 1986b; Yarwood and Edwards, 1995; Herbert, 1996a). This work is particularly relevant at present. There is currently debate in England and Wales about the most effective way to organise spatially policing, with controversial proposals to merge 43 forces into 12 to tackle better the threats of terrorism, internet crime, organised crime and civil disasters (O'Conner, 2005). Work by geographers on the spatial distribution and mapping of crime has been effectively applied to many policing problems (Monmonier, 2006) and geographers' understandings of spatiality and local social relations have the potential to make a valuable contribution to spatial and social understandings of community policing (Skoga and Hartnett, 1997; Herbert, 2006; Walker, 2003).

Space and policing are therefore closely linked and it is surprising that geographers have not afforded more time to their study. This article aims to assess geographical progress in the research of policing. It uses Fyfe's paper as a reference point to chart how policing and geographical research into this topic have changed over the past fifteen years. It argues that attention should be shifted from *the police* and towards *policing*. Two inter-related issues need to be addressed.

First, most geographical research has, to date, focused on the police (Fyfe, 2000). Consideration needs to be given to the increasing numbers of agencies that perform policing, including state, private and voluntary actors, as well as 'the police' themselves (Lupton, 1999; Crawford, 2003; Crawford *et al.*, 2005). This burgeoning of policing agencies has had a significant impact on the ways in which space is imagined, organised and policed, raising questions about the responsibility, accountability and effectiveness of policing in different spaces. These transformations have been widely recognised in other disciplines (Jones and Newburn, 2002) yet have been given little consideration by geographers.

Second, more critical scrutiny is needed of the term policing. Policing is more than simply preventing crime and implementing the law (that itself reflects hegemonic ideals) but refers to the enforcement of codes, standards and ideals held by society (Bowling and Foster, 2002). Closer attention should be paid the emergence of new discourses of policing and whether these have the potential to exclude, or include, particular groups from particular spaces.

To begin addressing these issues, the paper is divided into three parts. The first section examines the idea of governance and how it can provide a conceptual framework for the geographical study of policing. Based on this discussion, the second section examines how structures of policing have altered while the third section discusses the social and spatial implications of these changes.

## II Policing, Governance and Neo-Liberalism

It is important to develop a theoretical framework through which to examine the spatialities of policing, yet this is a task that geographers have struggled with in the past. At first glance, there is an obvious relationship between the state and policing: the police are empowered by governments to enforce their laws and maintain social order. The spatial organisation of the police reflects the political geographies of different states and their role also reflects, and helps to define, the public's relationship with the state (Fyfe, 1991; Mawby, 2002; Brogden and Nijhar, 2005).

Efforts have, therefore, been made to apply theories of power and the state to policing. However, these have fallen short because they have focused on *de jure* relationships and have failed to take into account the *de facto* actions, decisions and cultures of the police. Thus, Fyfe (1991) argues that left idealist thinking has not addressed the ways in which individual officers behave or exercise discretion when enforcing the law. Similarly, Herbert (1996a) considers that efforts to theorise the police's power relations using Foucaultian and Weberian frameworks have also floundered. The former tends to ignore the importance of central power, while the latter over-plays it.

Herbert (1996b) therefore calls for a theoretical middle ground that recognises the formalised practices of the central state yet is sensitive to the ways that policing is practised in different spaces. His solution is to draw on theories of

territoriality to examine how the police enforce particular spaces using a normative ordering of practices, rules and actions based around centralised values (Herbert, 1996b, 1997). His detailed ethnographic study of the Los Angeles Police Department effectively expands Fyfe's (1991) call to examine the mental maps of police officers by analysing the spatialised actions of police agents within wider policing structures.

However, the territories in which police operate have been subject to restructuring and intra-penetration by other agencies (Herbert, 1999). The job of policing no longer rests, if it ever did, with the police alone. A whole series of public, private and voluntary agencies have assumed responsibility for policing, or had it thrust upon them (Crawford, 2003). Geographers' theorisation of policing needs to take account of the complexity of changes at the state level and how these manifest themselves in new territories of policing. Whilst in broad agreement with Herbert's call for a theoretical middle ground, it may be argued that the geographies of policing may be better understood using perspectives from the geographies of governance.

In its broadest sense, governance refers to the relationship between different governmental and non-governmental organisations and recognises that policy and decision making arises from interaction between public, private and voluntary organisations (Rhodes, 1996; Jessop, 2000; Stoker, 2000), sometimes working in formalised partnerships (Edwards *et al.*, 2000). There has been on-going debate about whether the concept of governance is a theory in its own right or whether it merely represents a pre-theoretical way

categorising changes in local decision making. Initially, governance was closely linked with regulation theory, although Jessop (1995, 1997) has cautioned against the simplistic conflation of these two ideas. He argues that similar modes of governance may lead to different economic or political outcomes, or that one mode of regulation may result in very different state practices in different localities. Thus, changes of governance may not be indicative of changes in economic regulation, and vice versa. Building on these ideas, Painter and Goodwin (1995) have argued that structures of governance produce, and are produced by, different state institutions and practices in different spaces. The precise nature, composition and performance of governance are influenced by local power relationships in different places (Woods and Goodwin, 2006). Thus, a *geographical* understanding of governance is crucial. Goodwin (2006) maintains that governmental structures become 'sites of regulation' that contribute to the uneven development and influence of specific modes of regulation. It is therefore important to examine the interpretation and delivery of policy by particular agencies and how these actions impact spatially on specific modes of regulation (Cloke and Goodwin, 1992; Goodwin and Painter, 1996).

Theories of governance have the potential to link macro-level restructuring of the political economy with the policing of space at a local level. Far from being a deterministic, categorising device, it allows us to link *de jure* changes in the restructuring of criminal justice, with *de facto* impacts in different places. By focusing on the agencies involved with policing (from state policy to police officer to neighbourhood watch co-ordinator) it is possible to examine how



neo-liberalism has had differentiated impacts on the policing of particular spaces and, in turn, how these spaces contribute wider processes of regulation.

To date, criminologists have made connections between new forms of governing security and changes in regulation (Johnson and Shearing, 2003). Thus, it is argued, new forms of policing are essential to the creation of safe, sanitised spaces necessary for the re-structuring of capital (Raco, 2003). Politically, the shift to multi-agency policing reflects 'third way' ideologies that emphasise the public, private and voluntary sectors in decision making and service provision (Giddens, 1998), as evidenced by the growth of inter-and intra-agency working (Hughes *et al.*, 2002; Crawford, 1997, 2003; Lupton, 1999; Goris and Walters, 1999). Socially, new forms of policing are being introduced to counter a growing sense of risk, yet these are leading to exclusion of many groups from particular spaces (Beck, 1992; Ericson and Haggerty, 1997; Young, 1999, 2002). Taken together, these changes have been used as evidence that policing increasingly reflects neo-liberal forms of governance (Garland, 1996, 2001; Rose, 1996; Young, 1999; Johnston, 2000; Johnston and Stenning, 2003).

However, these analyses have lacked a spatial dimension. As Jessop (2000) and Goodwin (2006) caution, it is over-simplistic to link changes in a mode of regulation to changes of governance in a deterministic manner. Geographers can contribute to work on neo-liberal policing by examining the spatial dimensions of these changes and, in doing so, examine more closely the

connections between regulation and governance. Such work has the potential not only to inform work on the geographies of policing but to answer calls for more empirical studies on the spatial nature of governance (Jessop, 2000; Goodwin, 2006).

Consequently, the remainder of the paper examines the impacts of governing security in different localities. It is divided into two sections. The first discusses the changing structures of governance and new forms of policing. It examines who is responsible for policing different kinds of space. The second section examines the impacts of new policing spatialities on particular spaces and, in particular, whether spatially exclusive practices are emerging. It does so by focusing on what or who is (or is not) being policed in different places. The paper draws largely, but not exclusively, from countries that have adopted neo-liberalist policies, especially the UK, Australia and USA.

### **III Who is Policing?**

High crimes are viewed by some commentators as the norm in neo-liberal economies, a situation evidenced by dramatic increases in reported crime rates and attributed to a multi-dimensional process of economic, social and psychological restructuring (Johnston and Shearing, 2003; Garland, 1996). It has been suggested that a rise in expensive, portable goods, coupled with the reduction in local policing and a relaxation of social controls, has increased the opportunity and motivation to commit some crimes (Garland, 1996). A consequent rise in crime concern has prompted calls for the police and state

to 'do something'. According to Young (1999, 2002), these feelings of risk have been amplified by an 'ontological insecurity' caused diversification of lifestyles, wider travel, glimpses of other cultures and immigration. Demands from the mass media, especially in response to moral panics, have further contributed to the development of reactive crime policies that aim to appease public opinion and its demands for more punitive approaches to crime (Hughes, 2000; Loader, 2006). Drawing on analysis by Beck (1992), Johnston (2000) argues that citizens and governments have become concerned with reducing risk or 'preventing the worse' rather than achieving social justice or equality. Over the last decade, the focus of the criminal justice system has been on expanding exclusionary practices rather than the use of penal and welfare solutions to prevent the expansion of crime in the first place (Young, 1999; Herbert and Brown, 2006). One spatial outcome of this approach has been the creation of safe, sanitised spaces (such as private shopping centres or gated communities) that exclude 'other' groups (such as beggars, buskers or the young) on the basis of cultural rather than criminal threat (Raco, 2003).

The state has played a key role in the development of practices that emphasise control and exclusion (Garland, 1995, 2000). Rather than direct intervention, however, many neo-liberal governments have pursued an 'adaptive strategy' that witnessed the partial withdrawal of state policing and its replacement an 'extended policing family' that embraces elements of private and voluntary sectors. The aim has been to pass, or at least share, the responsibility of policing away from the government and towards other

stakeholders. These changes are embodied in the introduction of initiatives aimed at encouraging active citizenship and partnership working in the provision of policing (Lupton, 1999; Goris and Walters, 1999; Hughes *et al.*, 2002; Crawford, 1997, 2003). Consequently, the state now aims to encourage and enable community-based groups to police their own localities (Rose, 1996).

In terms of governance, new forms of policing represent an 'advanced liberal' form of governance that emphasises 'government through community' (Rose and Miller, 1992; Rose, 1996; Lockie *et al.*, 2006; Woods, 2006). The re-positioning of social responsibility onto local people has seen citizens assume the co-roles of consumers, providers and governors of local services (Rose, 1996), including policing.

However, the power relations within and between partnerships vary considerably over space. Despite the strong use of regulatory mechanisms and technologies, there is considerable local variation in the nature and composition of different partnerships (Edwards *et al.*, 2000). The power and direction of these networks are determined by the 'bargaining games' played by different actors within and between networks (Goodwin, 1998). It is therefore important to achieve a *geographical* understanding of policing and governance in order to understand the differential impact of these new structures on different places and the people in (or kept outside) them. Thus, governance theory not only has the potential to improve knowledge of policing but to increase understanding of governmentality as well (Woods and

Goodwin, 2002; Woods, 2006). The following sections trace the geographical impacts of the perceived shift from police to policing by examining state, voluntary, private and partnership-based policing in turn.

## 1 The Police

The relationship between the state and the police is a strong one with the organisation and operation of the police reflecting the political geography of the state (Fyfe, 1991; Mawby, 2003; Brogden and Nijhar, 2005). The police are 'a state agency mainly patrolling public spaces in blue uniforms, with a broad mandate of crime control, order maintenance and service function' (Reiner, 1994: 1003). In the past, commentators have identified two broad models of policing: the Anglo-American model of 'liberal policing' used in many democracies and the 'military' or 'Napoleonic' model used by more repressive governments (Friedmann, 1992; Bowling and Foster, 2002; Mawby, 2003; Brogden and Nijhar, 2005). These distinctions have become hybridised over time, with most forces evolving complex spatial divisions of labour to fulfil multiple roles (Table 1). This has led to a 'bewildering assortment of forces' (Emsley 2001: 50) with wide ranging, sometimes contradictory, roles from community policing to riot control (Bowling and Foster, 2002; Reiner, 1994).

[Table 1 here]

The activities of the police are largely focused on public space as they have restricted access to private space, at least in countries where civil rights and legislation limit intrusion (Herbert, 1996b). Public space is organised differentially to achieve a range of tasks (Table 1). For example, patrols are organised in a nested hierarchy of beats (Fyfe, 1991); community initiatives are organised around neighbourhoods (Yarwood and Edwards, 1995; Herbert, 2006) and tactical responses units (such as helicopters or anti-terrorist units) operate across much wider scales (Herbert, 1997). A recent development has been the policing of cyberspace to prevent crimes, including sexual offences and perceived terrorist threats (Jewkes, 2003).

These geographies have been impacted by neo-liberalism in two principal ways. First, the principles of market forces, as with many other public services, have been used to improve the accountability of policing to the public (Lupton, 1998; Bowling and Foster, 2002). The police in many countries have been increasingly required to devise annual plans that detail crime control targets, objectives and expenditure (McLaughlin, 2001). In turn, these that have been used to produce publicly available 'league tables' of police performance (Long, 2003).

At a strategic level, space has been re-organised to achieve these targets. Policing areas have become larger, with resources clustered in central areas to maximise the efficiency of emergency responses (O'Conner, 2005). The need to achieve performance targets is leading to greater use of 'intelligence led' policing, such as using GIS to map crime 'hot-spots' (Monmonier, 2006),

to pinpoint precisely resources in particular places. Forces seem to be undergoing an almost continual restructuring of their internal territories and organisational structures to target areas of highest crime and to meet policing targets. The use of performance data also has implications for the way that individual officers prioritise and work on the ground:

'we've got performance indicators, then we've got Ministerial Objectives, we've got police authority involvement in what we should be addressing, we've got targets to achieve through crime and disorder partnerships, then we've got Best Value Practice .. It just goes on and on' (police officer quoted in Phillips, 2002: 682)

In 1991 Fyfe called for a better understanding of police officer's 'mental maps' and how they negotiated tasks in particular spaces. It is clear that since this time operational activities and decision making have become more influenced by governmental rather than local priorities. The challenge for geographers is to examine how these are played out at different spatial scales and, in particular, how a perceived 'performance culture' is influencing the policing of local areas. Indeed, research by geographers has noted some resistance to this form of accountability. Herbert's (1996b) study of the Los Angeles Police Department, for example, notes that some officers manipulated the ways that they reported calls in order to manage their workloads or improve their performance figures. Newburn (2003) also cautions that constabularies can appear to change without actually changing. These findings emphasise the

need for further work on the de facto working practices of the police under changing regimes of governance.

Although the use of performance data can help the police to target better and pre-empt crime, it has had implications for the policing of particular spaces. In their efforts to re-organise space to maximise the efficiency of emergency responses, the police have been withdrawn from places where crime rates are relatively low, such as rural areas. This is leading to a growing public perception that areas of lower risk, such as the countryside, are un-policed (Yarwood, 2001). This removal of police from these areas has significantly contributed to the fear of crime and has led to growing, often vociferous and well-articulated, demands for improved policing in these areas (Yarwood and Gardner, 2000; Yarwood and Cozens, 2005). Further, in communities targeted by police for their higher crime rates, aggressive patrolling and policing, particularly of certain social groups, have contributed to poor police-public relations (Skogan and Hartnett, 1997; Herbert, 2006). Under- and over-policing are both outcomes of increasingly target-driven police forces that have neglected pro-active policing duties.

Consequently, a second facet of neo-liberal policing has been the almost universal adoption of community-based approaches by police forces around the world to address these deficiencies (Lyons, 1999). This is so much so that countries with traditionally 'Napoleonic', or military, styles of policing are developing community-based approaches. In France, for example, 'policing de proximité' has required the police to develop local policing plans based on



consultation with the local residents (Brogden and Nijhar, 2005). When Soviet regimes were replaced by democratic government, efforts were made to re-focus police accountability. In Hungary the police are now judged on the service that they provide to the public, rather than on how much power they exert (Friedmann, 1996). Similarly, in South Africa, the police have attempted to re-define themselves as a community-based force rather than a para-military organisation (Baker, 2002; Brogden and Nijhar, 2005).

The precise nature and practice of community policing varies considerably between and within different countries (Friedmann, 1992, 1996). However, a common thread has been that the police have aimed to improve contact and visibility with local people on a daily, pro-active basis (Brogden and Nijhar, 2005). Examples include the re-introduction of foot patrols, opening of sub-stations, attendance at community meetings, the deployment of 'beat managers' to police areas in a holistic fashion and the introduction of paid, uniformed 'support' personnel into the ranks of the state police to tackle low-level crime and anti-social behaviour in specific localities (Crawford, 2003). In general terms, the community policing is 'diary-led' rather than 'response-led' and aims to work *with* rather than *against* communities in the planning of policing (Bowling and Foster, 2002; Brogden and Nijhar, 2005; Yarwood, 2005; Herbert, 2006).

These measures operate in defined (by police and/or the public) neighbourhood or community spaces. While local attention no doubt improves accountability, some communities are better organised, compliant or willing to

involve themselves in community policing (Yarwood and Edwards, 1995). Consequently, community policing reflects geographies of co-operation, rather than need. It is a spatial irony that those living in high crime areas are most likely to be victims of crime but are least likely to benefit from community policing and, indeed, may be further excluded by it if they are perceived to live in an area associated with crime (Lyons, 1999). Consequently, community policing is not a panacea for policing accountability or efficiency (Friedmann 1992; Skogan and Harnett, 1997; Brogden and Nijhar, 2005). It has, though, led to an increase in multi and intra-agency policing that is affecting the way that local spaces are being policed. The following sections continue examining the role of other agencies in the policing of local space.

## 2 Voluntary Policing

Neo-liberal restructuring of the police has been supported by a discourse of 'responsibility' that views local communities, rather than wider social structures, as the solution to social problems (Lockie *et al.*, 2006; Herbert-Cheshire, 2000; Woods, 2006). Consequently greater emphasis has been placed on involving the public, or certain members of the public, in policing of their own localities. Although the emphasis of voluntary policing is usually at the local level, its impacts can vary significantly. Two examples are can be used to illustrate this.

The first example is Neighbourhood Watch (NW), one of the most visible forms of voluntary policing. Originating in American, NW has been adopted all

over the world in various generic forms (McConville and Shepherd, 1992). It was a fruition of 'active citizenship' policies that emphasised the duties, rather than rights, of local residents to take part in the policing of their localities (Fyfe, 1995a). It led to the establishment, definition and enforcement of local policing spaces by and for local residents using notions of defensible space and territoriality (Yarwood and Edwards, 1995). While NW schemes may reduce risk in its participants' neighbourhoods, it has been criticised for displacing crime into other localities (Bennett, 1992). Given that NW easier to establish in low-crime, middle class areas, this form of voluntary policing may exacerbate spatial inequalities in policing and contribute to exclusionary policing practices.

Evidence from Australia, however, suggests that voluntary policing can fill genuine gaps in policing rather than simply reducing risk in relatively secure neighbours and a second example of voluntary policing is provided by the 'night patrols' established by Indigenous people in 1995. Night patrols aim to locate intoxicated people and prevent them causing harm to themselves and others, thus reducing the number of people who come into contact with the justice system (Blagg, 2003; Blagg and Valuri, 2003). In Aboriginal communities voluntary patrols represent 'only consistently available mechanism for ensuring social order, preventing or defusing potentially violent situations and protecting the vulnerable' (Blagg, 2003: 10). Whereas the formal state police have been resisted by Aboriginal groups because of a history of repressive, colonial policing (Cunneen, 2001), these patrols represent an important part of self-governance and what Blagg (1998) has

called the development of 'liminal spaces' where hybridity and cultural difference can be accepted.

While some forms of voluntary policing may represent a governmental response to reducing risk, it is also clear that other forms of voluntary policing, such as Indigenous patrols, represent a form of resistance to historic repression by the state police (Blagg, 1998). Although the formalisation of voluntary policing could be viewed as evidence of the 'shadow state' (Wolch, 1990), whereby state governments have come to rely increasingly on a regulated voluntary sector to provide services, this is by no means an inevitable conclusion to neo-liberal restructuring. As the very different examples of NW and Night Patrols illustrate, the growth of voluntary policing can lead to the re-enforcing of exclusive space in some instances, yet it can also help to define spaces of resistance in others. These differentiated responses cannot be explained by changes in neo-liberal policies alone. Rather, spatial difference in the uptake and form of voluntary schemes is influenced by social relations in different places that are themselves products of historic, spatially uneven rounds of investment. It is important therefore, to chart the growth of voluntary policing in different spaces, recognising how space is organised by local actors while, at the same time, realising that these differentiated communities are themselves products of much wider political processes. As Goodwin (2006) asserts, it is necessary to appreciate the role that these different 'sites of regulation' play in the uneven development of neo-liberal policy.

### 3 Private Policing

Private policing has also played a role in the restructuring of space in neo-liberal regimes. A key facet of late-modern urban renewal has been the establishment of safe, sanitised spaces, such as shopping malls or luxury accommodation, to advance consumption-based lifestyles (Raco, 2003). This is so much so that Waterford (2005) argues that late-modern public life is increasingly played out in private spaces such as shopping malls or gated communities (Phillips, 2000; Low, 2003). As the development and management of these spaces has been driven largely by the private sector, with the state at best playing the role of a partner agency, it has fallen to the private sector to police these spaces.

Private space is policed in a fashion that emphasises the pre-empting of potential trouble (Davis, 1998). The UK's Bluewater Shopping Centre has attempted to ban the wearing of hooded tops ('hoodies') and baseball hats on its premises because its management feel that they intimidate customers. Private security officers operate in specific spaces and are more focused on preventing crimes against private property than those against the public (Fyfe, 1995b). Their work is governed by a clientelist relationship with private customers, rather than representing state policy or power (Waterford, 2005).

While the effectiveness of the private security sector can be questioned (Herbert, 1999), its influence continues to grow. The UK's 2001 Census suggested that there were more private security guards (159,704) than

regular police officers (149,964) working in Britain (Jones and Newburn, 2002). It is now more likely that members of the public will encounter a member of private security, such as a security guard, parking attendant or 'bouncer' (door staff), in their daily lives than a state police officer or volunteer. Private policing technologies, including CCTV, car alarms or security passes, are further testimony to the importance of the private sector in managing the security of private spaces. The sector has played a significant role in reducing fear of crime in private space (Johnston, 1992; South, 1998; Waterford, 2005). As Short (1989) demonstrated in the London Docklands, the presence of security was key to marketing private properties located in an area undergoing a contested transition.

Since this time, the boundaries between public and private sector policing have become increasingly blurred (Crawford *et al.*, 2005). There are instances when the police provide security for private interests (Kent police have a team at the above mentioned Bluewater shopping centre); local authorities employ private security to police public spaces (such as parks or housing estates); and some police sections (such as the enforcement of traffic regulations) have been sub-contracted to the private sector. The state has become more closely involved in the regulation of the private sector. In South Africa private armed response firms are used to enforce voluntary policing schemes in suburban locations (Baker, 2002). In the UK, Leeds city council has funded private security companies to supplement the police in some social housing estates (Crawford *et al.*, 2005).

What is clear is that private security has emerged in many different forms in many places. It is no longer the preserve of the 'fortress' shopping mall and its consumers, but has extended to the management of public spaces. The reactive, pre-emptive manner in which private security operates seems at odds with the more pro-active, community based approaches adopted by state police forces to local policing and lends support to the thesis that public spaces are being managed as if they were private spaces (Mitchell, 1997; Sibley, 2003; Waterford 2005).

The adoption or absence of private security appears to play a significant role in the restructuring of both public and private spaces, prompting a need for more geographically focused research on this sector. This should focus on not only the growth of private sector (Fyfe, 2000) but its contribution to the development of new urban spaces. Given the apparent disparities in their approaches to dealing with public space, attention needs to be paid to the relationship between private and state security agencies and their working relationship in particular places.

#### 4 Multi-Agency Policing

It has been suggested that the inter-penetration of the state police by the private and voluntary sectors is leading to a hybridised form of policing, referred to as the 'extended policing family' or 'plural policing' (Crawford *et al.* 2005). A central strand of this approach has been the implementation by the state of formal Crime and Disorder Partnerships (CDPs) to manage policing in

particular localities (Gorris and Walters, 1999). Thus, the UK's 1998 Crime and Disorder Act placed a legal requirement for the police and local authorities to co-ordinate local crime and safety partnerships but it did not prescribe how partnerships should involve local communities, initially favouring a hands-off 'what works works' approach (Home Office 1998). Given the apparent autonomy of crime partnerships to govern responses to crime, it is important to examine whether CDPs are significant role in the geographies of policing.

However, the growth of CDPs seem to represent 'government at a distance' rather than a new form of multi-agency governance (Lupton, 1999; Hughes *et al.*, 2002; Crawford, 1997, 2002; Yarwood, 2001, forthcoming). Far from being autonomous, the performance of crime partnerships is subject to surveillance and scrutiny by government agencies. Their funding and legitimacy relies on their members undertaking complex audits of crime in their area and developing strategies whose effectiveness is monitored using officially recognised data and analytical techniques (Phillips, 2002). Empirical evidence suggests that while the police and local authorities make efforts to involve voluntary actors, the burden of auditing and planning crime and disorder falls largely on their shoulders (Phillips, 2002; Newburn and Jones, 2002). The operation of CDPs suggests that, far from relinquishing its power to control policing, the state continues to govern and work *through* community (Garland, 1996, 2000; Johnston and Steening, 2003). Community partnerships represent a form of 'technological agency' that aims to ensure that policing is conducted in particular ways (Higgins and Lockie, 2002).



Other evaluations of CDPs have questioned their legitimacy, effectiveness and inclusiveness (Crawford, 1997, 2002; Hughes and Edwards, 2002; Hughes *et al.*, 2002). The participants of crime and disorder partnerships come from elite groups who are unlikely to live in high crime areas. Partnerships offer protection from attack by others but fail to address the deeper societal divisions that cause crime. Consequently, Hughes (2002) argues that they do little more than address symptoms rather than causes of crime, in the same way as some voluntary schemes. Rather than the aspatial development of rather rhetorical policing programmes, more radical approaches are needed to target the areas where crime is severely damaging people's lives.

Research into these partnerships suggests that they target particular groups of people in particular spaces and that certain groups are labelled and excluded from space by policing partnerships because they are 'out of place' rather posing a criminal threat (Gray and O'Conner, 1990; Cresswell, 1996; Young, 2002). Newburn (2002) concludes that policing partnerships should offer opportunities to build policing that embrace diversity and that move beyond cosmetic or zero tolerance approaches. It is therefore important to understand not only how policing can exclude from space, but how it does so according to moralistic, rather than criminal, criteria.

## 5 Implications

The previous section has traced some of the recent changes in policing, arguing that there has been a shift from the police to policing by a wider range of state, voluntary and private agencies. These changes may reflect a neo-liberal approach to the governance of security that has required non-governmental agencies to take responsibility for policing, leading to indirect governance 'through community'. This has led to a spatial re-organization of policing with different places being policed by different agencies in different ways. As the article implies, the spatial impacts of policing are by no means a one way process and, after Goodwin (2006), it may be argued that new policing structures represents 'sites of regulation' with policy being interpreted and implemented in different ways in different places according to the social relations found in them. This stresses a need for a geographical analysis of policing and governance at local, national and international levels.

However, new structures of policing not only reflect existing social structures, but have profound impacts on them as well. Herbert and Brown (2006) argue that punitive policing, coupled with neo-liberal policies that have reduced spending on social welfare, are contributing significantly to social and spatial inequalities in American cities. Indeed, as the previous section has implied, many new forms of policing are based on the identification of local spaces by particular agencies and the establishment of exclusionary policing practices to protect them. Thus, private security guards patrol a private shopping centre with the aim of excluded those who thwart or do not contribute to consumption and community schemes identify and protect named neighbourhoods from those living outside them. Exclusion rather than reform has become the norm

in many neo-liberal systems of criminal justice (Young, 1999; Loader, 2006). The remainder of the paper examines the impacts of these changes on people and places. Particular focus is given to the way that people and places are imagined within new geographies of policing and the social implications of these cultural constructions.

#### **IV What or Who is (not) being Policed?**

##### **1 Policing and Exclusion**

As the responsibility for policing broadens, it is important to consider whether the potential for social inclusion is increasing. Previous work by geographers has noted that the complex ways in which police have excluded people from particular places on according to their race, ethnicity and gender (see Smith, 1986a; Keith, 1993; Valentine, 1989; Pain, 2000; for example). It is important to build on this geographical knowledge to develop place-sensitive understandings of the de facto policing of minorities by the police and other agencies by considering how policing is culturally constructed by different agencies.

Policing is concerned with more than just the prevention of criminal activities. It refers to 'an intricate, almost unconscious network of voluntary controls and standards among people themselves and enforced by people themselves' (Bowling and Foster, 2002: 981). If policing is a 'universal requirement of any social order' (Reiner, 1994: 1003), then it is crucial to realise whose order is

being policed (Bowling and Foster, 2002; Waddington, 1999). If anything, policing is being guided more by moral than criminal concerns.

Young (1999) asserts that policing has undergone a significant sea-change. Past efforts to reform and integrate criminals have been replaced with a desire to 'hold at bay and exclude' particular social groups through barriers, incarceration and stigmatization. Wilson and Kelling's (1982) moralistic 'broken window' hypothesis has done much to prompt 'zero-tolerance' policing against not only crimes, but activities and people deemed to be out of place in particular neighbourhoods (Herbert and Brown, 2006). But, as Young (1999: 139) notes 'one person's order is disorder ... one group's normal behaviour creates intolerable conditions for others'. Efforts to remove beggars from city centres (Atkinson, 2003; Belina and Helms, 2003); sex advertising from suburbs (Hubbard, 2002) or nomadic people from the countryside (Halfacree, 1996; Sibley, 2003) confirm not only how policing can exclude from space, but that it does so according to moralistic, rather than criminal, criteria. There has been a blurring between crime, disorder and activities that simply threaten hegemonic standards and lifestyles (Cloke, 1993; Young, 1999, 2002; Sibley, 1994, 2003, Yarwood and Gardner, 2000; Ramsey, 2004).

The development of multi-agency working has been advocated as one way of improving social inclusion, providing opportunities to include and respond to a wide range of voices from different social backgrounds. Yet, as multi-agency policing has increased there is evidence that exclusion from may actually be increasing. This is exemplified by young people, who are frequently blamed

for crime (Pain, 2000) and, increasingly, are being targeted by exclusionary policing.

Sibley (2003) argues that some adults are increasingly defining the public realm as part of their private domain and are seeking more direct control of these spaces via the exclusion of particular groups, including children, from them. Thus, it has been shown that the presence of young people 'hanging around' public spaces contributes to rural residents' fear of crime more than any other group or activity (Yarwood and Gardner, 2000). In these cases young people may not be acting illegally but their activities are often seen as 'out of place' in particular spaces (Jones, 2000; Jones, 2002). Control over these spaces has been further enforced through the use of curfews (Collins and Kearns, 2001) (although the legitimacy of these measures has recently been challenged successfully by a young person) or new forms legislation (Sibley, 2003).

The use of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) against young people in the UK illustrates Young's thesis. ASBOs were introduced in 1998 and are issued by local authorities against a person who 'has caused or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household' (Home Office, 2005a). They are spatial in their operation, banning offenders, or likely offenders, from particular spaces where they have been associated with trouble. The breaking of an ASBO can be, and frequently is, punished by a custodial sentence. Between 1999 and 2005, 5,345 ASBOs were issued in England and numbers are increasing (Home Office, 2005b):

twice as many ASBOs were issued in the last quarter of 2004 than the same period in 2003. Significantly nearly half (46%) of all ASBOs in England and Wales have been issues against people under 18 years old. The use of ASBOs is also geographically uneven: only 21 have been issued in Wiltshire, compared to 816 in Greater Manchester since their inception. The use of ASBOs illustrates that the same policy can be applied differently in different spaces and stresses that decision-making within partnerships must be understood at the local level. These variations emphasise a need to appreciate that, within the same mode of regulation, governance and policing take different spatial forms, with contrasting social impacts (Jessop, 2000; Goodwin, 2006).

The use of ASBOs and curfews emphasises an exclusionary approach to criminal justice: one that seeks to mark and maintain particular spaces against those identified as troublemakers or potential troublemakers. Although the legitimacy of exclusionary measures is open to debate, policing agencies continue to enforce them and, increasingly, are turning to new technologies to help them do so. There is growing evidence that particular groups are being targeted through devices such as Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) (Williams *et al.*, 2000) and biotechnology (Graham, 1998). The following section reviews their contribution to geographies of policing.

## 2 New Policing Technologies

Electronic technologies represent an improvement in surveillance and, consequently, an improved disciplinary mechanism to control space. The panoptic approach has become such an important policing mechanism in many places that a person may be under almost constant surveillance from private or state controlled CCTV cameras<sup>1</sup> (Oc and Tiesdall, 2000; Holloway and Hubbard, 2001). CCTV has the potential to alter fundamentally the social geographies of public spaces by, for example, being used to target those, such as beggars or the young, who threaten consumption in urban centres (Fyfe and Bannister, 1996). Work on the installation and use of CCTV can reveal much about whose moralities are being policed and who is in danger of exclusion. Williams *et al.* (2000), for example, have revealed that cameras are not used in a passive way but, rather, to target groups or individuals who are perceived as culturally, rather than criminally, threatening to public space. Further, electronic devices can be used to monitor private (cyber) spaces, including mobile phone calls, texts and emails. In the UK the 2000 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIP) empowers the police to monitor 'large numbers of people in pursuit of a common purpose'. Despite the potential of these technologies to control people and space, their effectiveness is open to question (Fyfe and Banister, 1996).

Although Herbert (1996b) is impressed by Los Angeles Police Department's use of surveillance technologies, including helicopters, to apprehend a suspect, he also notes that on other occasions suspects are able to evade

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<sup>1</sup> Technology is also being used by private companies to survey and police the activities of workers (Graham, 1998; Molz, 2006). For example, lorry drivers may have GPS receivers in their cabs in order to trace their location and progress.

this technology and escape arrest. Herbert's work usefully illustrates that panoptic technologies need to be enforced if they are to remain a mechanism of social control. More attention should therefore be given to the ways in which policing networks share and act on information technology.

It should also be noted that, unlike Bentham's panopticon, surveillance is not a one-way operation. The police and other agents are themselves subject to regulation by the public gaze. The introduction of performance targets and tables, noted earlier, subject the police to scrutiny from each other (within and between forces and across ranks), the government, the public and, increasingly significantly, the media.

The beating of Rodney King by police officers in Los Angeles in 1992 revealed that the public are also able to survey and record the work of the police. Many protest marches are not only recorded by the police, but by the protesters to minimise perceived police abuse. The widespread availability of new, portable surveillance technologies, such as mobile phones with cameras, and the internet provide further opportunities for the public to police the police and other state agencies. Greater attention should therefore be given to the use of technologies by non-state groups to police particular spaces. Indeed, the police claim to be one of the most watched of the state's organisations and have become more conscious of their image in recent years (Mawby, 2002).



While the complexity of surveillance has yet to be fully realised, it is important to remember that, despite concerns that CCTV is leading to a 'Big Brother' state, many areas remain away from the policing gaze with important consequences for the people who live in them. Indeed, it is just as important to look at where and why unpoliced spaces are emerging in contemporary society (Herbert and Brown, 2006).

### 3 Geographies of Neglected Policing

While many academics and policy makers have given attention to public space, far less attention has been given to crimes, and the policing of, private space (Valentine 1989; Davies, 1994). Research in New Zealand (Panelli *et al.*, 2004), Britain (Warrington, 2001) and the USA (Webscale, 1996) has started to reveal the extent of domestic violence yet, as the traditional focus of policing has been on public rather than private space, crimes in domestic spaces continue to be neglected (Webscale and Johnston, 1997). Australia provides a telling example of this need.

Many Australian country towns are re-imaging themselves to encourage gentrification or tourism using sanitised, suburban constructions of heritage and rurality (Tonts and Greive, 2002). By contrast, Indigenous groups view public (open air) spaces in towns as places to congregate, negotiate kinship responsibilities and drink (Cunneen, 2001). Drinking in particular is problematic for constructions of white rurality, because it occurs in *public* spaces and clashes with the commercial and service functions of towns.

Aboriginal people are consequently seen as 'disrupting' (white) rural interests and ways of life and are constructed as non-citizens and 'untidy' (Cunneen, 2001). High levels of policing and arrest rates are used to enforce these ideals: Aboriginal people are twenty times more likely to be arrested than non-Indigenous people, especially for minor offences such as bad language or behaviour (Johnston, 1992). While attention is given to the policing of relatively minor public offences, very severe crimes in the domestic environment go largely ignored.

By contrast, recent research has estimated that Aborigine women and children are 45 times more likely to be a victim of domestic violence than other Australians and are eight times more likely to be a victim of homicide. Children are at least seven times more likely to be victims of sexual abuse (Gorden *et al.*, 2002). The policing of Aboriginal lands remains woefully under-resourced<sup>2</sup> with most communities lacking full-time officers and permanently staffed stations (Gorden *et al.*, 2002) and having to rely on 'un-sworn' officers and voluntary night patrols to provide partial policing cover (Blagg, 2003).

Practitioners need to pay more attention to the development of welfare-based systems of policing in rural areas, rather than the implementation of exclusionary policing practices (Garland, 2003). In doing so, a better understanding is needed of the spatialities, moralities and powers of policing in order to prevent social exclusion, both from public and domestic space.

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<sup>2</sup> The reasons for this are complex and reflect a history of oppression by colonial police forces. Space prevents a full discussion, but Cunneen (2001) provides an excellent commentary on these issues. Recently, in response to calls from Indigenous leaders, efforts are being made to build multi-purpose police stations in some Aboriginal communities to tackle crime and the social causes of crime (Gorden *et al.*, 2001).

## V Conclusions

This paper joins with Fyfe's (1991) call to pay closer attention to the geographies of policing. Despite his pioneering work, research on policing has remained on the margins of geography, despite strong interest and progress on crime and the fear of crime (Pain, 2000). This neglect is curious given that policing has an active research agenda in other social sciences (Newburn, 2003, 2005) and geography has a potential to make valuable contributions to it.

Perhaps one reason for geographer's neglect has been the apparent difficulty of theorising policing. Again, this is strange as policing policy and practice are one of the clearest reflections of state policy, revealing much about state power. The problem has been achieving a middle ground that allows both state policy and *de facto* actions at local levels to be understood. This paper has attempted to use some ideas from the governance literature to develop such a framework. Drawing on the work of criminologists, it may be concluded that this work does allow connections to be made between changes in neo-liberal regimes and new methods and forms of policing. However, as Goodwin (2006) has cautioned, the impacts of these changes are spatially uneven and it is simplistic to assume a straight link between neo-liberalism and local governance. Policing is a site of regulation that can vary between people and places. New forms of multi-agency policing may well be emerging in some places, yet it is apparent that the state maintains close control in many others.

Geographers should develop research into policing to contribute a spatial dimension to this analysis and identify how, why and with what consequences policing varies over space.

In this vein, it is also rash to imply that the state has been withdrawn from the governance of security or that inter-agency policing bears witness to the emergence of governance over government. It is clear that while direct government intervention may be reduced, the state continues to influence 'at a distance' or 'through community' by making communities more responsible for their own protection (Garland, 2000). After Foucault (1991) policing may be viewed as assemblage of different knowledge, technologies and practices that seek to shape conduct in particular ways. Policing represents a form of 'technological agency' in a wider system of governmentality that aims to ensure that policing is conducted in particular ways. The re-deployment of community does not represent a withdrawal or hollowing out of the state but, instead, a technology that can be used to govern effectively 'from a distance' (Higgins and Lockie, 2002).

This does not imply a one way process. The wider involvement of different agencies in policing gives community groups the potential to articulate demands for better policing to the government (Woods, 2006). However, some groups are likely to be more empowered than others. It is equally likely that these demands will focus on the exclusion of others, contributing further to the spatial inequalities of policing.

Ideas from governance and governmentality therefore provide a useful way of conceptualising policing. As well as increasing knowledge of policing, the geographical study of policing allows more to be learnt about spatial regulation of governance.

This paper has taken a necessarily broad view of policing but has tended to refer to everyday activities. Given the nature of recent terrorist attacks and on-going national and international security alerts, some readers may have found discussion of certain activities, such as the twitching of net curtains by Neighbourhood Watch members, trivial by comparison. Such disparity serves to highlight the shear range of policing and the challenge faced by governments and policing agencies seeking to govern security in an effective and inclusive manner<sup>3</sup>. There is certainly scope for geographers to move from the general review presented in this paper to a more specific examination of particular aspects of policing. Attention, for example, should be given to the social and spatial outcomes of anti-terrorism policing and the erosion of civil and spatial liberties.

The opportunity to examine such a breadth of activities highlights that the study of policing has the potential to contribute to many areas of human geography. Policing manifests both local and national power relations and how these are played out in space. The manner in which an area is policed both reflects and, more importantly, reflects social relations and geographies.

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<sup>3</sup> These forms of policing are not unrelated as Ian Blair, the commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, outlined in a recent speech: 'National security depends on neighbourhood security. It will not be a Special Branch officer at Scotland Yard who first confronts a terrorist but a local cop or a local community support officer. It is not the police and the intelligence agencies who will defeat crime and terror and anti-social behaviour; it is communities' (Blair, 2005)

Geographers are well positioned to undertake such endeavours. Despite changes in the nature of policing and new theoretical directions in its research, this paper echoes Fyfe's call for more emphasis to be placed on policing in geographical research and re-affirms his assertion that it is central to progress in social and political geography.

### **Acknowledgements**

I am grateful to two anonymous referees and Sarah Radcliffe for constructive comments on earlier drafts of this article. The research for this paper was aided by an Endeavour Award sponsored by the Australian Government's Department of Science, Education and Training.

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**Table 1 Multiple policing roles and spaces. Source: Based on Bowling and Foster (2002)**

<b>Function</b>	<b>Mechanism</b>	<b>Spatial Operation</b>
Public Reassurance	Visible police patrols; contact with individuals and community organisations; effective crime investigation and emergency service	Arbitrarily-defined (sometimes by public) 'neighbourhoods'. (Yarwood and Edwards, 1995; Herbert, 2006)
Crime Reduction and Peace Keeping	Visible patrol; targeted policing; proactive policing; effective crime investigation and emergency service	Nested hierarchy of formal beats (see Fyfe, 1991; Banton 2005).
Crime Investigation	Reactive detection work to arrest offenders and bring them to justice; proactive investigation	International, national and regional (Walker, 2003); private and public (Herbert, 1996b)
Emergency Services	Rapid response to disputes, disturbances, accidents and emergencies	Divisions and sub-divisions organised for maximum efficiency of response (Smith, 1986b; Mawby and Wright, 2003)
Public Order Maintenance	Controlling crowds at sporting events, entertainment and demonstrations; planned or reactive	Site-specific operations (Fielding, 2005).
State Security	Protection of public figures, state buildings, covert policing of dissident organisations	International, national and regional; private, public and cyberspace (Matassa and Newburn, 2003).