

The Gift of Policing: Understanding Image and Reciprocity

by

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## **Author's Declaration**

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

## Abstract

The Community Based Policing model has been adopted by the large majority of policing agencies as another tool on an officer's duty belt that allows them to do their job more effectively and efficiently.

The model is premised on the building and maintaining of relationships of the Police Service and the community it serves. The model argues that Services must ensure that the community is given a voice in the way police enforce the laws. The model encourages that the police and community work together in a partnership that is different from the traditional relationship shared between the two groups under the previous Professional Policing model. This working in partnership means that not only must the police become more open to the community providing direction in the way they do their job, but also that the community must take a more active role in the policing of their areas. This partnership could be considered an exchange of information from both the police and the community.

As argued by Marcel Mauss in *The Gift*, relationships that are on-going and have elements of exchange have obligations. These obligations of giving, receiving and reciprocity ensure that the relationship between the groups is not only maintained, but strengthened. When one of these obligations is not met, however, there are often social consequences.

This research attempts to understand the model of Community Based Policing in terms of how it is being applied by Canada's second oldest police service, the Hamilton Police. With the model encouraging a relationship with the community, issues of gift exchange appear. Through interviews with staff of the Hamilton Police Service, as well as citizens from the community of Hamilton, how these obligations are being met, as well as the effectiveness of the model and its relation to Maussian theory of gift exchange are explored.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### The Importance of Studying the Police

Anthropology has striven to distance itself from its roots as travel writing, only to retain its preference of studying the exotic. Studying abroad was not only more exciting, but also proved more financially rewarding in terms of grants and revenue generated by book sales. If marriage and kinship patterns of residents in Elmira, Ontario were studied, few if anyone would be interested. Change the location to a foreign locale and people will listen. Eventually, having run out of foreign locales to study, anthropologists began the migration to study “home”. However, what was seen was that this “home study” would take the form of studying the exotic in a domestic location. Anthropologists continued to be fascinated with what was different and in effect reminded them of the ‘others’ that were studied in the past, such as witches in modern England or Voodoo priestesses in Brooklyn (Brown 2001, Luhrmann 1989). This studying of the domestic exotic often also portrays the groups as powerless in society, a theme that was quite common in foreign anthropological work. As anthropologists have continued to spread their scope of research across the world and in our own backyard, there has been a distinct lack of research done in areas that are familiar, or plain. This means that often significant areas of research may be overlooked, leading to potential gaps within the discipline’s theories.

Laura Nader has long argued that anthropology is missing out by being so selective in the locations and to a lesser extent the people that are being studied (Nader 2002). As anthropology has continued to evolve, the opportunities that the discipline has had for research have often been ignored, in favour of the foreign locale. As Nader has argued, when we fail to study up and look at the organizations that control and oversee the functioning of society, we miss out on a better understanding of relationships, social hierarchy and class structure in the very world we live in. Still, even with Nader, a weakness in her research has been that like the study of the exotic, studying up tends to cast a group as powerless. In an article written by Nader on the importance of “studying up”, she argued that as anthropologists we “have a great deal to contribute to our understanding of the processes whereby power and responsibility are exercised” (Nader 1969 b: 284). By stating that “never before have so few, by their actions and inactions, had the power of life and death over so many” (Nader 1969 b: 284), she is assuming that the relationship of power falls from those of higher social standing to those with less. This assumes that those without social standing are powerless and fails to completely recognize the complex relationships that groups and communities have with each other and in the way the wielding of power is not obvious. This lack of studying the groups that appear powerful may have been due to lack of access or funding. Regardless, from Nader’s basic argument, the importance of studying them becomes obvious.

Nader's ideas concerning the importance of studying up are furthered with the new field of public issues anthropology. This new sub discipline argues that the field of anthropology has much to contribute in terms of studying social issues and helping society to progress. The field of anthropology has long striven to better understand the world we live in. Now is the chance for the knowledge to be put to use.

With that being said, why a study on policing, especially considering that sociology and criminology has been doing them for so long? The importance of the research is in the way it is done. While in the industrial state, policing is something that touches everyone at some point, both directly and indirectly, its relationship with the public and the way police agencies carry it out is rarely understood. As argued by Monique Marks and Maurice Punch, studies in the past sought to analyze how things were being done and to change it (Marks 2004, Punch 1983). While this is not to be critical of other disciplines, these studies fail to recognize the human elements in policing. It is hoped that by looking at the police through the eyes of an anthropologist, a better understanding can be made in terms of how and why things are the way they are. If change is necessary, let us first understand why, before recommendations are made.

In order to understand why, this thesis has had to consider the benefits and nuances of exchange theory itself. As David Easton points out, exchange theory is limited in its use in politics as it is unable to completely explain motives behind people's actions (Easton 1972:146-148). The debate concerning

exchange theory is also about whether exchange is utilitarian or functional in nature. If exchange is seen as utilitarian in principles, then it is the greatest good for the greatest number, which does not necessarily take into account issues of generalized and balanced reciprocity. If it is functional, then the roles and behaviours of society through the process of exchange will ensure that the needs of the community are met.

In this thesis, I will be looking at exchange as a culmination of both. In a democracy such as Canada, the greatest good for the greatest number must be met. As I found with my research, the Community Based Policing model's requirement of definitions means that there will be people left behind. In other words, the model looks at the greatest good for the greatest number.

Likewise, the model falls in line with the idea of functionalism in so much as it depends on the acting out of roles and categorized behaviour in order to ensure the needs of society are fulfilled. Where it deviates from true functionalism, however, is in the requirement of change within those roles, at least initially, to work properly. This change in role may be, at least in part, the reason the model is met with hostility, which I will discuss later.

This thesis will also look at how other anthropological theories concerning taboo and ritual, as well as exchange theory, can help explain the way police interact with the communities they serve, especially through the Community Based Policing model. This model has been largely embraced by the policing community as an effective way to police, with the most visible

benefits to the community if implemented properly (Whitelaw and Parent 2006).

## **The History of Police and Policing**

Human populations have long struggled with the concept of law. In one respect, laws protect society from individuals and groups that may seek to cause harm to other persons or their property. But laws do something else that is often in conflict with the protection they offer. Laws are also a form of control by the State and society, imposed on its members through force (Foucault 1995, Herzfeld 1997, Greenaway and Brickey 1978). As defined by Malinowski, “The rules of law stand out from the rest in that they are felt and regarded as the obligations of one person and the rightful claims of another” (Malinowski 1969 [orig. 1922]:55). It is obvious that as society grew and became more diverse, the issue of cultural hegemony became a bigger challenge. In order to ensure consent to be controlled was given by the members of a society; rulers of large areas often gave individuals some authority to ensure laws were followed.

Sir Robert Peel created the idea of the modern police officer in 1822. In answer to a number of riots and uprisings against the loss of jobs in the industrial revolution and the increase in prices, Peel’s police officers were meant to assist in the restoration of peace and the enforcement of the laws. Realizing that the police would be seen as a mode of class control, Peel attempted to institute hiring policies that welcomed males from all social classes. As Peel put it, “the police are the people and the people are the police” (Griffiths, Parent and Whitelaw 2001:7). Prior to Peel’s Metropolitan Police

Service, policing in England was done through a network of community representatives, with each neighbourhood being responsible for policing themselves. As such, law enforcement dealt with merely catching criminals and did little in the way of crime prevention. As Peel was organizing his modern police service, he knew that in order to gain the support of the public, the police should not solely be aimed at catching law breakers, but also at the prevention of crime. Eventually, the community grew to accept the police and they would become a branch of government meant to improve the lives of all citizens and ensure their safety as British society grew in wealth, complexity and size (Griffiths, Parent and Whitelaw 2001, McKenna 2000).

As the police evolved and spread into North America, police services moved away from some of the concepts brought forward by Robert Peel. Initially, the concept of policing was overtaken by political appointments. As argued by William Greenaway and Stephen Brickey, laws are created and enforced by groups with distinct interests in them. Greenaway and Brickey argued that the laws often reflect social class and therefore, what is important to the “ruling class” is often what is protected in the laws (Greenaway and Brickey 1978: 227). As police continued to grow, however, they saw the need to distance themselves from the political influence that tried to control them.

What grew from this shift was the idea of the Professional Policing model. This model saw the community less involved with the police, saw officers patrolling neighbourhoods with little or no interaction and answering radio calls as needed. The idea was that the police were the professionals who

knew how to best deal with crime. As such, they would patrol areas when not answering calls for service with the thought that a visible cruiser was a deterrent for those who would commit criminal acts (Griffiths, Parent and Whitelaw 2001). This concept, however, soon proved to be flawed. The desire to be professional led the police to become removed from outside influences, both from political forces and the community. Police officers in the 1960's were seen to be biased both towards economic and racial classes. As time progressed, police services were finding that crime rates were going up and also that they were having a hard time maintaining law and order (Kelling and Moore 1985, McKenna 2000).

As time progressed, the need for a new way to police the public was recognized. This desire to do things better was met at the same time with the need to be more fiscally responsible. A model was needed that could assist with the reduction of crime and do it with less; this was the start of the Community Based Policing model (CBP). Building on Sir Robert Peel's view of the police being the people and the people the police, the CBP model strove to give a voice to the community and at the same time reduce an ever-growing issue of maintaining law and order (Griffiths, Parent and Whitelaw 2001, Kelling and Moore 1988, McKenna 2000). The Community Based Policing model recognized the need for the community to be more involved with policing. It argued that the police were not always the experts in what was affecting the community and moved policing towards a partnership with the community.

## Community Based Policing in Ontario

As the 1980's progressed, the idea of Community Based Policing was growing in popularity. As defined by Brian Whitelaw and Richard B. Parent, Community Based Policing is "a philosophy, management style, and organizational strategy centred on police-community partnerships and problem solving to address problems of crime and social disorder in communities" (Whitelaw and Parent 2006: 51). It has been accepted by law enforcement that when implemented properly, crime rates could drop; police could be more fiscally responsible and could also receive more community support (Griffiths, Parent and Whitelaw 2001). While the United States were quickly advancing the concept of Community Based Policing, the idea was already somewhat established in Canada (Whitelaw and Parent 2006: 3-42). This is likely attributed to the way policing in Canada was done. The concept of policing in Canada closely mirrored that of policing in England. Single Constables, or Sheriffs, were hired to police communities and enforce their laws. Due to the sparse population of early Canada, the idea of a regular police service was not considered by many communities until it was absolutely necessary (Griffiths, Parent and Whitelaw 2001, Weaver 1995). When police services were formed, the officers' numbers were typically much smaller than those of their American counterparts. This meant that Canadian Constables were much more likely to not only be reflective of the communities that were policed, but also less distanced and more involved with them (Griffiths, Parent and Whitelaw 2001, McKenna 2000, Weaver 1995). It is important to note, however, that Canada

has two major types of police officers, the municipal officer and the RCMP officer.<sup>1</sup> For the municipal officer, it is relatively easy to see how they would be reflective of the community they police as they are often hired from or from nearby the community.<sup>2</sup> As for the RCMP, they were initially started as a means to police the ever expanding and sparsely populated western frontier. Initially, the creation of the RCMP was a temporary measure; the RCMP was to step down, once the communities became established and populated. What was seen, however, was that since they were already set up, the RCMP was asked to stay and police a number of municipalities in Western Canada. RCMP members are hired from across the country and are stationed in any one of the locations policed by the RCMP across the country. As a result, the RCMP does not necessarily reflect the communities in which they police (Griffiths, Parent and Whitelaw 2001).<sup>3</sup>

By 1991, the Ontario government and most governments in the country recognized that Community Based Policing was a better way to do policing. Forced to recognize the need for fiscal restraint due to the downloading of costs onto the municipal governments, the Community Based Policing model allowed for police to in effect do more with less, as the model encourages the community to take a more active role in their policing. Legislation was added to the Police Service Act of Ontario that would make police services interact

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<sup>1</sup> While there is also the provincial police officer, such as the OPP, they have been included in the category of municipal officer, as they are more likely to resemble members of the community as they are at least from the same province.

<sup>2</sup> Exact statistics as to how many are actually hired from within the area are not available, but my experience is that municipal services prefer to hire locally.

<sup>3</sup> This appears to have been a difficulty that the RCMP have been forced to overcome and they are still challenged by it, as any number of news reports indicate.

with the community and form partnerships, with the desired effect being a more secure Ontario with the police and citizens working together for a common goal. In fact, it is two simple sentences within the Ontario Police Service Act that lay out the core ideas of the Community Based Policing model. Within Section 1 of the Act lies the declaration of principles. It not only states that police in the province will uphold the laws of the land and ensure the security of the public, but also recognizes:

*S. 1(3) The need for cooperation between the providers of police services and the communities they serve.*

*S. 1(5) The need for sensitivity to the pluralistic, multiracial and multicultural character of Ontario.*

(Government of Ontario 2008)

With these two sentences, the Community Based Policing model was embraced by policing in Ontario. While they reflect the core values of the models, they do not address the underlying principles of it, as we will see.

## **Ethnography of the Hamilton Police Service**

At this point I feel I should explain why I chose to use the Hamilton Police Service for my research. In general, police services are very closed-door organizations in terms of what they will say to outsiders. Officers generally are very dual in personality, having an ‘official’ answer that would be appropriate for anyone in the service to say and their own personal opinion that does not always reflect the service’s point of view. As such, speaking with officers about

how they feel the Community Based Policing model is working could lead to some very misleading information if everyone towed the party line.

I am a police officer with the Hamilton Police Service and have been since 1999. I am known to a large group of my fellow officers and as a result have some semblance of trust with them. I am what anthropology defines as an insider, with access to information and opinions that would not generally be seen by the public. While I could have used my insider status with another agency and gone outside of Hamilton, I felt that my relationships I had built within the service would make receiving information easier and more honest.<sup>4</sup>

Hamilton is located in southern Ontario, about 100 km from Toronto. The community has a storied past and has become synonymous with hard work. Known as “Steel Town”, the city had a humble beginning in the early 1800’s with farming. With its location on Lake Ontario, the area soon became a bustling harbour, where the goods from then Upper Canada could make their way to the United States and back. As time progressed, these ports would soon bring the steel mills to the community, which helped the city grow and make it what it is today (Eyles and Peace 1990; Weaver 1995).

The Hamilton Police Service is largely reflected as a typical Canadian police service. For the vast majority of communities in Canada, policing was left to the community. People were often appointed by the Crown to make sure that the King’s Peace was followed, but it was the expectation of the Crown that

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<sup>4</sup> As I will discuss later, it also led to some conflicts that I was forced to address during my research.

the communities would police themselves. This mirrored policing in England, to a large extent, where the community was not only responsible for policing themselves, but also to determine what laws should be policed. These are truly the origins of Community Based Policing, as argued by McKenna (2000:20).

In Hamilton, policing started in 1833 with the hiring of a High Bailiff, who answered to the newly chartered town's police board (Weaver 1995:50). The Bailiff was a paid position, who was authorized to command others to help as needed in enforcing the laws. Due to budgetary concerns and some argue the fear of having a professional police service; police in Hamilton were mostly volunteers or constables that were hired only when absolutely needed (McKenna 2000; Weaver 1995:50-53). In 1851, however, that would all change. Unlike most communities, especially in the United States of America, which saw having a full-time paid police service as a sign of progress, it was necessity that caused Hamilton to embrace the idea. During a protest involving hundreds of striking labourers, the local politicians asked that the government send troops to protect the Queen's Peace. The federal government, however, refused to send any military personnel until a local constabulary had been formed and proven ineffective at dealing with the uprising. As a result, Hamilton would create its first paid police service of 27 officers, with the assistance of the nearby community of Dundas and the local railway. This police service would eventually become the Hamilton Police Service (Weaver 1995: 52-53).

Over the years, the Hamilton Police Service would take on different forms. In the 1970's, with provincial regionalization, the Service would grow to encompass the neighbouring communities of Ancaster, Dundas, Flamborough, Glanbrook and Stoney Creek. During this period, the police service was known as the Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police Service, which was how they were known when I was hired. In 2000, the provincial government would again change the face of Hamilton and remove the regional government and instead force it to become a metropolitan city. Again, the service was known as the Hamilton Police Service, but they continued to police the areas looked after as a regional service. Today, the Hamilton Police Service employs approximately 1000 people, of whom two-thirds are sworn police officers, and had an operating budget of approximately \$122 million for 2008 (Hamilton Police Service 2008). In terms of ratio of police to citizens, the service sits around 675 citizens per officer. This is slightly higher than the province's average of 517 people per officer (See Table 1), but is not a number that is unmanageable. What it does show, however, is the importance of the police in working with the community and having good relations with the citizens they protect, in order to ensure that they have a high level of cooperation when necessary.

**Table 1:  
Police Officers, by province and territory (Population per Police Officer)**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Canada</b>	535.0	529.5	522.7	514.2	508.9
Newfoundland and Labrador	675.3	662.6	638.2	604.1	575.0
Prince Edward Island	666.0	648.8	627.4	610.7	603.5
Nova Scotia	580.8	576.3	560.9	531.4	502.1
New Brunswick	577.6	579.3	580.3	565.4	554.6
Quebec	523.3	515.0	506.7	505.5	502.8
Ontario	535.0	536.5	534.8	523.7	516.8
Manitoba	516.6	520.5	509.5	492.6	494.5
Saskatchewan	495.0	492.3	486.5	487.2	475.6
Alberta	626.2	614.9	601.5	609.2	612.6
British Columbia	594.4	572.2	562.7	542.4	544.4
Yukon	255.2	258.8	269.1	260.4	269.5
Northwest Territories	250.4	247.0	248.0	243.6	238.8
Nunavut	240.9	248.0	249.2	253.0	261.8

*Source: Statistics Canada 2008*

In 1999, the Hamilton Police began what was known as COPP 2000 (Challenging our Patrol Priorities into the Next Century). Following years of study of other services and review of Hamilton’s organization, COPP 2000’s final report recommended a major restructuring in order to “be the best, progressive community-driven police service in the nation” (Hamilton Police Service 1999). The COPP 2000 program would come to be known as the Neighbourhood Safety Program and was a model that was based on the Community Based Policing model. Once implemented, it saw the Hamilton Police Service undertake what was considered a major reorganizing of its members and how it provided service to its citizens.

From the patrol level, the ‘beat’ or geographical area that an individual patrol officer was responsible for changed. Beats were reorganized into ‘zones’

with four 'zones' being placed in a 'sector'. Their boundaries were arranged so that in theory, each zone received the same number of calls per year.

Responsible for each sector was a newly created position, the Crime Manager. This position was assigned to those holding the rank of Sergeant and their duties were to ensure that the community had an outlet where they could voice their concerns and that those concerns could then be passed on to the sector's officers. When properly implemented, this re-organization, even though it still was based on the patrol squad scheduling assignments, which were not related to the COPP 2000 program, would allow for the sector officers to have a better understanding of the problems in their given neighbourhoods and to be aware of what steps were being done to correct them (Hamilton Police Service 1999: 16-34).

The model also called for the use of Intelligence Led Policing, which is a "model of policing in which intelligence serves as a guide to operations, rather than the reverse" (Hamilton Police Service 1999: 35). As an off-shoot of the Community Based Policing model, the Intelligence Led Policing model required the free flow of intelligence and information between units within the police service, as well as from the community and to the community. The one thing that this model assumes, however, is that there is already a relationship established with the community, which is generally the group that provides the police with the information. As such, I agreed with David Weisburd and Anthony Braga, who argue that police innovations into their actions being determined (even if partly) through intelligence is still part of the Community

Based Policing model umbrella (Weisburd and Braga 2006:12-17). With that I continued to look at the Hamilton Police Service, the Community Based Policing model, Gift Exchange Theory and the relationships that were and were not present.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Of interest is the fact that, as Weisburd and Braga point out, policing in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century is quick to accept innovations in the way they do things. What they argue, however, is that the services are often falling back on traditional models when the new ones don't live up to expectations (Weisburd and Braga 2006:12). While conducting my research, I was curious to find out if this was truly the case.

## Chapter 2: The Theory of the Gift

It is virtually impossible to think of the human experience without considering how humans interact with each other. It is this interaction that makes us “human”. That defines how we live and how we grow, both as individuals and communities. It is this interaction that is the centre of being a police officer. One cannot be a police officer and not interact with the public. That interaction leads to exchange. Exchange is common place and often taken for granted in everything they do, be it enforcing the laws or addressing the concerns of the community. It is this interaction that forms the basis of my research. As a police officer, I wanted to better understand the portion of my job that occurs at every minute I am on duty. As I looked at the interaction of police and public, I realized that the interaction was exchange as discussed by Marcel Mauss in his theory of gift exchange. While not a tangible gift in the popular sense, I saw that the exchange between police and public, or the movement of information between the two groups, fits this classic theory and as I delved into it, it became the basis of my theoretical approach. In essence, no matter what type of model is being followed, policing involves, at its most basic level, the police providing protection and safety for the community and the community providing civil obedience.

## Marcel Mauss and the Gift

Marcel Mauss's research looked at the ways in which people interact with each other through trade. On the surface, Mauss's theory deals with the exchange of tangible goods. Looking at the Kula trade and the research conducted by Bronislaw Malinowski, Mauss formed a concept that addressed the building and maintenance of relationships and was a response to what he was perceived as a failing of the capitalist idea of trade and commerce. It was this perception that led him to conclude that there was no such thing as a free gift (Mauss 1990 [orig. 1922]). Mauss argued that the basis of trade could be self-serving and also beneficial to the other parties involved (Levi-Strauss 1987: 45-50). To prove this, Mauss looked at trade such as the Kula in the Trobriand Islands and the Potlatch in the Northwest coast of North America. In both of these ceremonies, the participant is expected to follow social rules and exchange items with the other members of the community. In the Kula trade and in the Potlatch, as items were moved back and forth between individuals or groups, there were expectations that came with them. These expectations, when met, allowed for the building of a relationship that would then extend further than what on the surface appeared to be a mere symbolic trade of items, both of utilitarian and non-utilitarian nature. If expectations were not met, the symbolic relationship would become strained and further trade would not be possible. Trade and the expectations that came with them meant that it was a way to build a reputation between groups that if done properly, would benefit all involved. This benefit to both parties helped to ensure that trade would continue in a

somewhat circular fashion and grow as a relationship was built, or as Mauss described, “The Kula merely gives concrete expression to many other institutions, bringing them together” (Mauss 1990 [orig. 1922]: 27).

It is important to point out at this junction that Mauss also saw the importance of magic and the supernatural in the process of exchange in the indigenous groups he was researching. He felt that the threat of curses and taboo rules were in part responsible for the ways in which exchange took place between the groups he researched (Mauss 1990 [1922]: 10-13). Items exchanged possessed their own spirits, which could be called upon to attack the receiver of the item if the exchange was not properly reciprocated. The items would also maintain a portion of the giver’s spirit, or *hau*, thus maintaining a personal quality, even if abandoned (Mauss 1990 [orig. 1922]: 11). This does not mean, however, that groups that do not have an active belief in the supernatural do not fit with Mauss’s views on exchange. In fact, as I will elaborate further in this paper, the supernatural and the taboo can exist in a modern ‘non-believer’ world. The difference, however, is that it is not necessarily recognized.

In this thesis, I will be concentrating on those aspects of Mauss’s Gift Exchange Theory that are more relevant to the concerns of police officers. I will be looking at the portions of Mauss that deal with the obligations created by gift exchange that control how exchange between groups take place within a relationship: the obligation to give, the obligation to receive and the obligation to reciprocate. Much debate exists on the existence of free gifts and whether or

not Mauss's theory should be used as much as it is. I will not attempt to settle these questions in their entirety. What I will be doing is to look at the theory and seeing if it is applicable to the Community Based Policing Model that police in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century are using. From there, I will be looking at what this might say about the theory itself and of the model.

When one looks at *The Gift*, one can see three basic components that have been widely accepted as the core of the theory: the obligation to give the item, the obligation to receive the item and the obligation to reciprocate the exchange (Mauss 1990 [orig. 1922]: 13). Since these obligations and the concept of there not being a free gift form the core argument of this paper, I feel it necessary to state my opinion concerning them now, defend it and carry on.

Some of those that attack Mauss are often attracted by the idea of the free gift (Laidlaw 2000). Mauss did not readily accept the concept of the free gift. He felt that goods exchanged between groups where a relationship existed bore properties that forced "the gifts to circulate, to be given and returned" (Mauss 1990 [orig. 1922]: 33). Despite his view, the argument can be made that there are instances when gifts between people who have a relationship are "free". An example that appears in North American society is the love of a child for its parents and vice versa. This gift of love can be argued to be a free gift, especially when looked at through the four basic principles required for a free gift as argued by Derrida (Laidlaw 2000: 621). These premises include; that no reciprocity can occur, that the recipient must not recognize the item as a gift or themselves as the recipient of one, the donor must not recognize the item

as a gift or themselves as giving one – thereby eliminating self praise and gratification and finally that the item cannot exist as a gift itself.

While on the surface, it could be argued that this is an example of a free gift, as the love of a parent and child has no reciprocity, the love is not recognized as a gift and does not exist as a gift on its own. The underlying element that does show this natural relationship to not be a free gift, however, is the sense of gratification and future expectations once the child has grown. An argument can easily be made that no parent does not feel some sort of gratification when the love they have for their child leads to some sort of accomplishment. Therefore, even a parent's love has some sort of 'reward' or reciprocity in the end<sup>6</sup>. In North American society, the idea that there is no price for a child or parents' love does not address the fact that most parents have children to either carry on the family name or to ensure that they have someone to take care of them when they get older. While a child cannot be *expected* to reciprocate the love of their parent, when they mature and establish themselves as an adult they certainly can. The reciprocation between them is not something that necessarily has a timeline of when or how it should be carried out. This is certainly akin to the relationship between the community and the police, as I found in my interviews with members of the community, who drew parallels between the police as the parent and the community as the child.

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<sup>6</sup> This reward could even appear due to compulsion as parents who do not properly care for their children are also at risk of criminal and social consequences.

Attacks on Mauss have also focused on his view that the obligations of the participants in the Kula trade were always met. Mauss's research argued that the fear of a loss of reputation, garnered with a fear of reprisal through the supernatural meant that all participants in the Kula trade ensure that their obligations were met (Mauss 1990 [orig. 1922]). Annette Weiner argued that Trobriand exchange was based on the following three principles:

(1) It is essential for people to control human behavior, but this control is constrained by formal rules of social interaction. (2) Despite formal rules, complete control over others is never assured because every individual is accorded some measure of autonomy. Thus the nature of control and autonomy introduces an element of danger into the relationship. (3) This danger is further intensified because of the cyclical nature of Trobriand exchange. The attempt to control is not limited to the socio-political sphere but includes a cosmic order of time and space. Individuals are concerned not only with present situations but with a past and a future in which death is made less threatening. To ensure that order rather than chaos is maintained, the "social construction of reality" is built up on the dialectical opposition between personal desire and the social and cultural ordering of events and persons (Weiner 1976:219).

Weiner is arguing here that despite the rules surrounding the exchange process in the Trobriands, the participants will resort to bending the rules whenever acceptable (Weiner 1976).<sup>7</sup>

As argued by Michael Herzfeld, non-compliance in reciprocating the exchange does not mean that relationships are necessarily going to become strained. In his work in Greece, Herzfeld saw that many social obligations were not being met in the way that they were in theory supposed to be. Herzfeld saw that "The static image of an unspoiled and irrecoverable past often plays an

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<sup>7</sup> The fact that most anthropologists recognize that in both Mauss and Malinowski's work, people sometimes go out of their way to avoid the obligation of reciprocity, is an example of the cultural intimacy in terms of unspoken acknowledgement within the discipline as well.

important part in present actions” (Herzfeld 1997:109). What that means is that humanity often looks at the past for exemplars of the ideal way that things should be done. When something is not carried out in the ‘proper’ way, it actually can lead to a reinforcement of social bonds through what Herzfeld defined as cultural intimacy. This cultural intimacy strengthens the bonds between social groups as they are more apt to understand why things are not done or are done in certain ways rather than others. It allows people some laxity in filing current observations without questioning the rightness of the rules, but providing the alibi, “If today’s world allowed it, of course we would do things as perfectly as our ancestors did.” In Herzfeld’s research, the police and the state often had a difficult time entering and policing the rural communities of Crete. In the past, animal theft was a quietly accepted tradition in the communities. As the practice grew to encompass the commercial stealing of animals, however, the police and the state were sometimes able to gain the community’s assistance and trust as it was no longer the traditional or ‘proper’ way to do it. This in turn acted as a sense of cultural intimacy between the two groups (Herzfeld 1997:138). Of course, the limits to intimacy became apparent when people in a few hill villages in Crete switched from animal theft to drug trafficking and started aiming AK47s at the police (B.B.C. online news clip 2008).

Cultural intimacy sets bounds to violations, at the same time it tolerates them, but it will break down if those bounds are breached. This research

conducted by Herzfeld is just some of the anthropological research that looks at exchange.

When exchange is examined, there is much debate as to the causes and effects of this seemingly “human” event. Marcel Mauss long argued that exchange fell into two different categories, “commodity” and “gift”. These categories were also assigned to specific geographic areas, with “gift” being largely found in the Trobriands and similar societies and “commodity” being part of the industrialized world (Carrier 1991, Mauss 1990 [orig. 1922]). The separation of the “gift” and “commodity” led to what was largely a critique of Mauss’s theory of obligation and reciprocity, the transactional view of exchange.

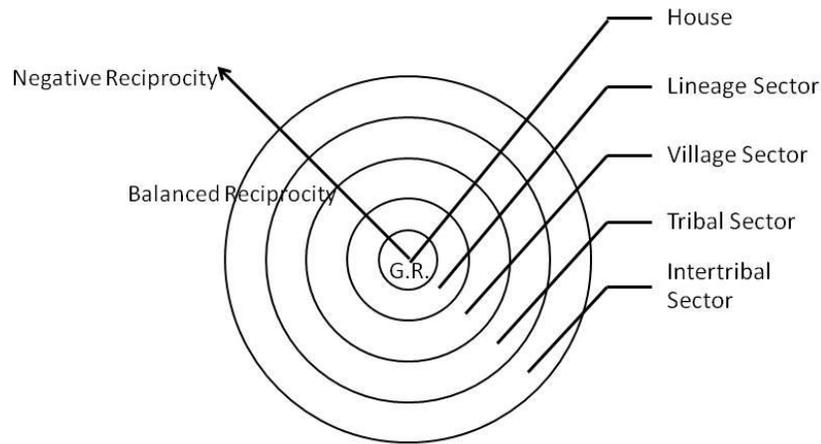
Frederik Barth argued that exchange should be looked at on an individual basis and not necessarily in terms of the long-term effects for the community as a whole (1965). Barth held that the individual was guided largely by personal interest and was not necessarily governed by a desire to benefit the community (Carrier 1991: 129). In a review of the literature, Edward Hecican reflects on Barth and others’ contribution to exchange theory. In an overview of Barth’s Generative model of exchange, Hecican argues that “collective interests emerge when men pursue individual advantage, but because other men are likely to share similar goals, they also found that by modifying their goals they reduce conflict, and thereby establish mutual expectations and gain” (1986:98).

As evident from this one quote, the generalist or transactional view of exchange weighs largely on the idea of the individual need taking priority. It

also nearly eliminates the need for obligations of reciprocity as all exchange mirrors those in a capitalist economy, where it occurs on an individual basis, with no impact on future exchanges (Carrier 1991). It can also be argued that this view of exchange is an attempt to make the Trobriand cultures and those not represented by Mauss's "industrial" definition more in line with the western idea of capitalism (Carrier 1991: 121).

This idea is further evidenced in Marshall Sahlins's look at primitive exchange. In Sahlins's *On the Sociology of Primitive Exchange*, he argues that as exchange moves away from a close relationship with the individual to the relationship between tribes, so does the type of reciprocity move from generalized exchange to that of negative reciprocity (See Table 2) (Sahlins 1972: 193-204). Sahlins seems to take a utilitarian view of exchange, where he recognizes that in the end, it is the greatest good for the greatest number, with a lean towards individual advantage (Sahlins 1972: 170-171).

**Table 2: Reciprocity and Kinship Residential Sectors**



(Sahlins 1972:199)

For Sahlins generalized exchange, or exchange where reciprocity is not immediate and known, is altruistic in nature and predominantly found between people who share familial relations. Obligations of reciprocity do not have immediacy and if exchange is not reciprocated, it does not “cause the giver of stuff to stop giving (Sahlins 1972: 194). As argued by Nobuyuki Takahashi, Sahlins’s view of generalized exchange is based on altruism and causes him to not see it as a valid mode of exchange but rather as a type of “free gift” (Takahashi 2000: 1108). He argues that what Sahlins is apparently not considering in this argument on generalized exchange is that a free gift can only exist where there is no relationship, familial or otherwise, compelling

compliance. In all familial exchanges, there is a relationship and regardless of the type or time it takes to occur, reciprocity will eventually happen.<sup>8</sup>

Takahashi further points out that generalized exchange is not necessarily a free gift and that reciprocity is not necessarily a direct line. He agrees with Sahlins in that generalized exchange starts with kin and close relations, but that it spreads out to become part of the community as a whole (Takahashi 2000: 1129). Citing numerous psychological and sociological experiments, Takahashi argues that the participants were all concerned with the society as a whole and did not think of their immediate gain, but how much the recipient of their exchange reciprocated with everyone else (Takahashi 2000: 1130). In other words, Takahashi argues that as people exchange, they are not worried so much with their profits, but the eventual profit of the community at large.

This is further argued by S. R. Schulman, who argues that Sahlins has overlooked the fact that although the benefits of reciprocity may be nullified among altruists, they are still at a greater advantage for having partaken in the exchange (1978: 284). This is likely due to the fact that even though they have put themselves at a disadvantage in the short term, they reap rewards through the building and maintaining of their relationships.

While Takahashi and Schulman argue that Sahlins did not see the benefits of generalized exchange correctly, I believe that he touches on them in his discussion of the *hau*. In his book, *Stone Age Economics*, Sahlins discusses the *hau* that Mauss discussed in his book, *The Gift*.

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<sup>8</sup> This assumes that free gifts exist at all, which is something I personally do not necessarily subscribe to.

Sahlins argues that Mauss saw the *hau* as the reason for exchange. The spirit of the giver and of the item itself would haunt the recipient and the fear of reprisal would cause them to reciprocate (Mauss 1990 [orig. 1922]: 11, Sahlins 1972: 150). As Sahlins argues, Mauss saw exchange in terms of fragmented occurrences and that the only way to tie them all together was *hau*. This view only addressed why gifts were reciprocated and did not address why gifts were exchanged in the first place (Sahlins 1972: 150). In order to determine what would start exchange, Mauss argued that it was fear of warfare that cause groups to exchange when they knew it could cost them (Mauss 1990 [orig. 1922]: 13). The fear of *hau* and the fear of future reprisals for not exchanging was not something that Sahlins necessarily agreed with.

For Sahlins, class relationship is important when addressing generalized reciprocity outside the familial relation. The exchange between police and citizen, doctor and patient, is general in that there is often no immediate reciprocity in the exchange (Sahlins 1972: 197). This is in part due to the kinship distance referred to in Table 2. In terms of *hau*, however, it means more.

Sahlins look at the *hau* did not take the spiritual definition that Mauss did. While he recognized that in Maori communities the *hau* plays an important role in some things, he felt that Mauss misinterpreted its actual meaning. For Sahlins, it was not the spirit of the item or the fear and terror that exchange created that caused items to move between people, it was the profits. Sahlins does agree with Mauss in that exchange creates obligations. It is the root of

those obligations that are different with Sahlins's view. When Sahlins defines *hau*, he argues that it is something to be repaid or in other words, interest due (Sahlins 1972: 157). It is this profit that Sahlins takes on as the core function of exchange. Drawing on Hobbes and *The Leviathan*, Sahlins points out that understanding the possibility for individual gain in exchange is humanity's "triumph of reason" that removed them from the fear and terror of primitive life and allowed for the creation of the State (Sahlins 1972: 180). He points out that under Mauss's definition, with the elimination of the spirit, the gift is not required and that is the move to the modern world. What Sahlins argues, however, is that *hau* is not strictly the spiritual as Mauss saw it, but rather the profits to be made by the individual taking part in the exchange. To that end, the concept of the gift could still exist in the modern world, regardless of the type of exchange that was occurring.

In regards to generalized exchange, Sahlins saw that it could exist outside of the family unit and that it was often able to promote or maintain social positions and ranks, where individuals were owed and that the *hau* or profit to be made by either side in the future, whether it be a 'bribe' for past support or authority for future consideration, made it possible (Sahlins 1972: 180-225).

Sahlins' idea that generalized exchange can occur outside of familial relations is paramount to the concept of Community Based Policing. As I would find in my research, the issues of reciprocity are not clearly defined. The CBP model argues for a close relationship between the police and the

community. It challenges the police to provide a service and build on the relationship with the community, who are expected to reciprocate the “gift” as time progresses. Their lack of reciprocating will not stop the police from providing the service due to their obligation to give, but it will strain the model. As the relationship grows, however, and the public begins to take a more active role in policing, the exchange should move to a more balanced example of reciprocity, however it will never actually be a “tit-for-tat” exchange and will always be generalized. It is this profit for all that reflects Sahlins’s view of *hau* in exchange.

This is further pointed out by Lygia Sigaud, who argues that Levi-Strauss felt that Mauss’s interpretation of *hau* was not complete (Sigaud 2002: 352). In discussion of Levi-Strauss’s introduction on *The Gift*, Sigaud states that it was felt that “Mauss had logically determined that exchange is a common denomination in a great number of human activities,” but as Levi-Strauss argued, Mauss used *hau* as the binding agent that linked these activities (Sigaud 2002: 347). What Sigaud does call on, as did Levi-Strauss and Hedicen, is that those researching exchange (and *hau*) must consider it in terms of the society in which it occurs.

With the exchange of Community Based Policing occurring in not only the policing community, but also in the community where it is being applied, this thesis had to interpret the model at a number of different levels. Throughout my research, I was met with issues concerning individual motives and ideas of profit. David Easton points out that exchange theory cannot solely

determine the individual's actions (1972: 131, 147). What he calls for in his look at the advantages of exchange theory for political science, is that researchers take the theory and compare it to what they have found in the real world. This would allow the theory to either be discarded as trivial, or evolve into an accurate representation of humanity. This is what this thesis has attempted to do in a small way, take the classic exchange theory and apply it to the social structure of policing and the daily exchange with the community.

Many anthropologists, including me, still see merit in Mauss's work on exchange theory. Johnathan Parry, who supports the theories first espoused by Mauss, argues that "it is not individuals but...moral persons who carry on exchanges" (Parry 1986: 456). Parry points out that, contrary to Sahlins view that Mauss was presenting a specific ideological view based on the Maori; he was in fact providing a theory concerning the indissolubility between people and the exchange of items and ideas (Parry 1986: 457, Sigaud 2002: 355). For Parry, exchange in this framework occurs by those that are more interested in the furthering of the community as a whole and not solely moved by their own motives. James Carrier furthers this argument when he points out that there is room for both the individual and collective in terms of exchange within a community. Carrier sees these exchanges "as two kinds of relations coexisting, albeit perhaps uneasily in the same society" (1991: 122, Gregory 1980, Sigaud 2002: 353). With both forms of exchange being able to coexist together, Hedican's call, in his review of transactional theory, for anthropologists to "not

only understand micro group exchange, but the wide social environment” (1986: 114) is only emphasised that much more.

In writing this thesis, as with all research concerning social theory, I have had to consider two issues. The first is the relevancy of the theories and opinions I have considered in terms of social theory in general. The second is the applicability of those theories to the specific issue I have looked at.

To this end, looking at the Community Based Policing model in terms of exchange, I had to decide which model of exchange best reflected what the goal of CBP really was. Considering that both transactional and Maussian forms of exchange occur within even industrialized communities, I began to wonder if the conflicts between the two models affected the Community Based Policing model. When an officer I was dealing with became nervous over the Maussian Gift Exchange theory sounding like bribery, I realized that they were looking at it in terms of a transactional model or even in terms of fear of *hau* as argued by Sahlins. For this officer, however, the exchange with the public did not go past that one event. When I compared this to what the Community Based Policing model actually needed, a relationship with the community being policed, I understood that the Community Based Policing model and its goal of a relationship of agency and community meant that the needs of the community were realized through an interconnected web of social relationships. As pointed out by David Easton, the concept of exchange must realize the existence of an “interconnected system of behaviour” which is influenced by various webs of relationships (Easton 1972:131).

While in all interactions between people there are various elements of reciprocity and exchange, the Community Based Policing model argues for a more classic view of exchange, where the betterment of the community through the establishment and building of relationships is key (Whitelaw and Parent 2006: 51). This does not necessarily mean that the Maussian view is necessarily the best way to consider exchange, but in terms of policing and the Community Based Policing model, I felt that the Maussian idea of exchange is more appropriate.

### **Mauss, Gifts, and Community Based Policing**

Mauss's research addresses much more than just the exchange of tangible goods or gifts between people in a relationship. When looked at closely, it becomes evident that Mauss's theory also applies to the intangible. As is becoming more commonplace today with the internet making information more accessible, the concept of intellectual rights implies that ideas and thoughts are also items that can be exchanged and given a value. Even though thoughts and opinions are not tangible, they are still valuable, especially to the police and other governmental institutions, as they allow them to have a better understanding of what is happening around them, to the people they represent. It is this 'intangible' element of gift exchange that I will attempt to address in this paper.

As Mauss points out, gift exchange theory deals with the exchange of items between groups involved in a relationship. Once an invitation to exchange is accepted, the exchange not only serves to move items between groups, but also serves to bring institutions together (Mauss 1990 [orig. 1922]: 27). When looking at the institution of policing, the concept of community based policing has changed the way the police interact with the community. As argued by Stephen Mastrofski and Wesley Skogan, the Community Based Policing model is one that challenges the police to build a relationship with the community through outreach and reorganization (Skogan 2006; Mastrofski 2006).<sup>9</sup> It is this relationship that I feel is the element of the Community Based Policing model that not only links itself to Mauss's gift exchange theory, but also removes the idea that policing could be a free gift. In the public presentation of the relationship, the police are promoting themselves as friends to the community and also as the same defenders of law and order that they have always been. Yes, they are still being paid and yes, they are still in a position of power that the ordinary citizen does not have, but it is the presentation of themselves as an active listener that I saw as a gift. There was a relationship between the police and the public in the Professional Policing Model, but the relationship with the Community Based Policing Model is by definition, different. As will be discussed further, the voice given to the community by the police is something that community members did not have, to

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<sup>9</sup> It is interesting to note that while both Mastrofski and Skogan are arguing that the model is one that builds a relationship between the police and the public, Mastrofski is arguing that the model has not succeeded as desired while Skogan is arguing the exact opposite (Skogan 2006; Mastrofski 2006).

a large extent, before the emergence of the model. The voice is in fact a gift that the police are giving to public, not only as a necessity of the model, but also to encourage the building of a relationship. This relationship is an element that all publications concerning Community Based Policing recognize, even the Ontario Police Service Act, which governs the police and how they carry their business in Ontario (McKenna 2000, Government of Ontario 2008). I suggest that the voice is in fact not only a gift, but also an item that can be traded and as such, if Mauss is correct, part of a relationship in which trade and reciprocity must exist. It is this element, how the gift of a voice for the community is being reciprocated that I initially focused on. As my research progressed, I found that it was not the only issue that emerged.

### **The Taboo Police Officer**

With the exchange noted by Mauss, there were complex rules of spirituality, hierarchy and taboo that followed all trade (Mauss 1990 [orig. 1922]). Rules of the taboo gave structure as to issues such as who is it with whom one trades and how should reciprocity take place. With my own experience and as I progressed with my field work, I began seeing things that, to me, showed the rules of taboo were very much present. In her research concerning taboo, Mary Douglas saw it as a way to address issues that were dual in identity. *Purity and Danger* was not just a book about taboo in regards to food pollution. It was also a way to explain society's fears concerning that which could not be easily defined. Douglas examined society's issues in terms of two categories, clean and unclean. When an item did not fit into either one

completely, it was argued that this caused anxiety towards the item. Ambiguous items were seen as not having a definable border and therefore people did not know how to deal with it. (Douglas 2005:48)). As argued by Scott Michaelsen and David E. Johnson, “a border is always and only secured by a border patrol” (Michaelsen and Johnson 1997:1). For Douglas, this border patrol that secured the border was expressed in the form of taboo.

When an item is categorized as taboo, there are two main ways to deal with it. The first is avoidance of it and the second is its suppression (Douglas 2005, Zulaika and Douglass 1996:152-153). As argued by Douglas, the Jewish avoidance of pork is a classic example of the duality of definition and the item’s subsequent avoidance. Douglas points out that pig are unable to be classified in the same group as cattle. “As the pig does not yield milk, hide nor wool, there is no other reason for keeping it except for its flesh” (Douglas 2005:68-69). Since pork is cloven-hoofed as are cattle but are not ruminant, they offer a source of meat as do cattle, but nothing else, they are not the ideal and thus unclean. By looking at this taboo against pork, one can see how it is their duality in definition, similar to cattle and yet not similar, that kept them as taboo.

Douglas further argues that ambiguous items lead to anxiety in the community. They force the society to take an ‘either or’ definition of the item. They also force the community to consider suppression of the item in order to prevent it from continuing to contradict social rules and values and thirdly, they

encourage avoidance of the item to strengthen definitions they do not conform to (Douglas 2005:68-69).

The European Witch is an example of this duality of definition, leading to anxiety, avoidance and suppression. Witches can be almost anyone. The Salem witch trials saw everyone in the community risk accusation, especially those that had difficulty in their relationships with Samuel Parris. The condemned included a diverse group, from Sarah Good, a village outsider and only occasional Church goer, to George Burroughs, a past village minister. (Rapley 2007:63-97). These people fit many definitions that caused anxiety within the community.

Sarah Good was a female member of the Church who lived within what was supposed to be a close knit community and yet she was labelled as cantankerous and indignant (Rapley 2007:69). George Burroughs had been a highly respected minister that had moved away from the community amid a cloud of controversy. He had both supporters and people that held anger towards him. As can be seen, both of these people are dual in nature. Sarah Good was a member of the community and at the same time an outsider. George Burroughs was a man of God who also had enemies. Their dual persona would have left many feeling anxious. Their failure to fit easily into definitions of community membership was part of the reason that the youthful accusers were able to get away with labelling them as witches and heretics. From there, they were avoided and eventually put to death. This falls nicely in line with what both Douglas and Steiner say about taboo. A blurred border led to the

avoidance and eventual elimination of the person so that they were no longer able to conflict with the definition of a normal person and also to strengthen the definition of what a normal member of the community was (Douglas 2005, Zulaika and Douglass 1996). This discussion on witches as taboo is akin to something that I have seen repeatedly, the police as taboo. It is this view of them as taboo that will also affect who partakes in exchange with the police and how the exchange can take place.

Throughout my research and my personal experience, I saw that the police were taboo. It is not surprising to hear police officers say that they are city workers when asked what they do for a living. Unlisted telephone numbers and other ways of “hiding” their careers serve not only to protect the officer’s privacy and occasionally the safety of their families, but also serve to influence how members of the civilian population deal with them. I have found that it is not uncommon to be treated differently by a person when they find out what I do for a living.

If we consider the arguments set out by Douglas and Steiner, it is easy to see how policing may be taboo. Much like witches, who would hold their Sabbaths at night, away from the eyes of others, the police are largely a closed door institution that does not welcome prying from “outsiders” and keeps information away from those it terms as civilian. This secrecy is a necessary element of policing due to the confidential and sensitive nature of their job, but it also serves to start the seed of mistrust. In fact, it is likely that the general public’s knowledge of policing as an institution is largely based on

representations from the media, which are not always accurate or beneficial (Abi-Rashed 2008).

Policing may also be considered as unclean occupations, which like witchcraft in European society, could be thought of as involving evil elements. Officers routinely come into contact with the gamut of society. They deal with those often considered polluted by North American society, such as the homeless, the drug addicted and the dead. They also, however, have to deal with the normal citizen who may be in a crisis situation. It is this wide scope of interaction that would have labelled policing as unclean, according to Douglas. In *Purity and Danger*, Douglas points out that temple priests were not allowed to come into contact with many of the individuals that police do on a regular basis. If they did, they would have been labelled as polluted and impure (Douglas 2005:64).<sup>10</sup>

Lastly, like witches who were not easily defined as members of the community, the police are also becoming indefinable as to their role within North American society. Police are first the enforcers of the law. They are tasked with the maintenance of order, the preservation of peace and the protection of property (Gardiner 1700, Griffiths, Parent and Whitelaw 2001). They are also members of the community, who when not working are living in the same communities as the people that they are sworn to serve and protect.

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<sup>10</sup> An argument could also be made that it is the power to punish that renders police taboo as well. This taboo could both prevent people from taking the laws into their own hands (and risk becoming taboo) or from the police taking their power for granted and becoming more alienated and taboo.

They are the only citizens, in Canada, that have the authority to take away civil liberties, seize property or when necessary, take life. They have a tremendous amount of power over the individual rights of other citizens and yet they look like you or me. This lack of a clear definition is all the more obvious when the Community Based Policing model is considered.

The Community Based Policing model was created in the USA due to governmental pressure to find a way that was more effective than simply patrolling the streets, as well as in order to give the community a voice (Griffiths, Parent and Whitelaw 2001, McKenna 2000). The model was quickly adopted into Canada due to its relatively easy fit with the way policing was already being done (McKenna 2000: 20, 66-91). The model offers a voice to the community, which could be argued to be a gift it did not have before. It also begins to change the image of the police officer from that of enforcer, to that of friend. It is in part, intended to remove the taboo that police have when interacting with the public and bring them to a more human appearance. However, it also serves to create an ambiguity in that the police are now both enforcer and friend and actually may serve to reinforce the taboo. It is this very ambiguity, I believe, to be the root cause of many of the problems faced by the police in the western world. It also falls in line with what Douglas, Rapley, Zulaika and Douglass have argued. Being secretive, coming into contact with the unclean and being ambiguous in definition, it is therefore expected that police would cause some anxiety among the general public. With police and

witches sharing so much in common, it is not surprising to see that police may be taboo (Moore 2008).<sup>11</sup>

## **Police, Cultural Intimacy and Ritual**

If we therefore accept that police are taboo, then the exchange that occurs with them will be even more structured and the participant that exchanges with them wary of becoming polluted. This is something that follows arguments made by Herzfeld in his look at cultural intimacy. For Herzfeld, structural nostalgia helps to explain the compromising of purity. In his research, when two shepherds are seen together outside of a Church, it is assumed that they are there to address accusations made between them, often over the theft of property. While they might be there to worship, they are not believed to be there for any other reason (Herzfeld 1997:12). The distance they travel to get to the Church, leads to the enchantment of the Church and the purpose for which they are there.

This is also the same for police and public interactions. It is not uncommon for people to call the police and expect them to come to their home. The police station has always been an area where the public was not welcomed. Now, under the Community Based Policing model, police stations are becoming more public friendly and the public are being encouraged to come to the station to file reports as well. This distance travelled by the public, however, may in fact lead to an enchantment of the stations. As in the case of the shepherds at

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<sup>11</sup> It was this concept of police as taboo that struck me as possible reasons why the police have not been studied greatly by the field of anthropology, which was the topic of a paper I presented to CASCA during their annual meeting in May, 2008.

Church, why else would people go to a police station unless they had done something wrong? It is this enchantment that could explain why the police remain taboo, despite their efforts to become more approachable by giving a voice to the community.

While the voice is encouraged to be used at any time, it is given an outlet during community forums. As I observed and as is discussed by Benjamin Chesluk, these forums are situations that often see the police and the public reverse roles. As I looked closer, I saw exchange taking place in a condition of liminality through ritual process. To better understand the ritual I was seeing, I felt it important to look at Victor Turner's work on ritual and liminal stages. Victor Turner argues that there are three elements to all ritual and the symbols they have: exegetical meaning, or what the participant sees; operational meaning or what the participant does with the ritual and symbol; and positional meaning, or how it relates to other symbols (Turner 1967:50-11). Turner's work centred on religious symbols and looked to better understand them from an encompassing perspective. In his research, Turner would look at symbols and rituals and see how roles and identity would change during the process. In conjunction with Turner's work, as pointed out by Herzfeld, ritual also serves to bond opposing groups together, or in other words, "It provides a symbolic means for creating conditions under which mutual trust...can be restored" (Herzfeld 1997: 137).

In his work with the Ndembu, Turner recorded a ritual involving the chief-elect, the night before he became chief. As a respected member of the

community, the chief-elect was forced to dress in nothing but a ragged waist-cloth and sit with his wife, back to back in a modest or shameful posture inside a simple hut built for this ritual. He would then be washed with medicines and then insulted and criticised in what Turner referred to as “The Reviling of the Chief-Elect” (Turner 2008:100).

Kafawana now breaks into a homily, as follows: Be silent! You are a mean and selfish fool, one who is bed-tempered! You do not love your fellows, you are only angry with them! Meanness and theft are all you have! Yet here we have called you and we say that you must succeed to the chieftainship. Put away meanness, put aside anger, give up adulterous intercourse, give them up immediately! We have granted you chieftainship. You must eat with your fellow men, you must live well with them. Do not prepare witchcraft medicines that you may devour your fellows in their huts – that is forbidden! We have desired you and you only for our chief. Let your wife prepare food for the people who come here to the capital village. Do not be selfish, do not keep the chieftainship to yourself! You must laugh with the people, you must abstain from witchcraft, if perchance you have been given it already! You must not be killing people! You must not be ungenerous to people! But you, Chief Kanongesha, Chifwanakenu [“son who resembles his father”] of Mwantiyavwa, you have danced for your chieftainship because your predecessor is dead [i.e., because you killed him]. But today you are born as a new chief. You must know the people, O Chifwanakenu. If you were mean, and used to eat your cassava mush alone, or your meat alone, today you are in the chieftainship. You must give up your selfish ways, you must welcome everyone, you are the chief! You must stop being adulterous and quarrelsome. You must not bring partial judgments to bear on any law case involving your people, especially where your own children are involved. You must say: “If someone has slept with my wife, or wronged me, today I must not judge his case unjustly. I must not keep resentment in my heart.” (Turner 2008: 101).

This ritual served a number of purposes. It was a chance for the participant to speak and act in a way that would not be allowed in normal circumstances. This “venting” at the Chief-Elect would serve to lessen social tensions for the participant, which had built up previously. It would also serve as an opportunity

to criticise the Chief-Elect for possible bad behaviour and inform him what was expected from the community. According to Turner, it also helped serve as a reminder to the Chief-Elect that after all he is still a member of the community and that he must remember that when using their power and authority (Turner 2008: 102-104). The liminality created by the ritual served to bring the two groups together and as Herzfeld argued, restore social trust.

Ritual, however, does not always help bring groups together, even if that is its intention. For Foucault, when he looked at changes in executions over time, he saw that the roles of the public changed to become participants for whom the ritual of execution was intended (Foucault 1995:60-63). What he saw happening was that the executions, as they became more of a spectacle of the state's authority, also saw the lines of legality being crossed and the role change becoming dangerous:

It was evident that the great spectacle of punishment ran the risk of being rejected by the very people to whom it was addressed. In fact, the terror of the public execution created centres of illegality: on execution days, work stopped, the taverns were full, the authorities were abused, insults or stones were thrown at the executioner, the guards and the soldiers; attempts were made to seize the condemned man, either to save him or to kill him more surely; fights broke out, and there was no better prey for thieves than the curious throng around the scaffold...the people never felt closer to those who paid the penalty than in those rituals intended to show the horror of the crime and the invincibility of the power (Foucault 1995:63).

When looked at in relation to Turner, it becomes evident that ritual does see changes occur in the status of the participants. When the status of a ritual's participants changes, the relationship between the participants must also change.

With a change in relationship, also inevitably a change in exchange and reciprocity between the two groups must occur. In terms of the Community Based Policing model, I was forced to consider whether or not the elements of ritual I saw in the carrying out of the model had changed the roles and status of the police and public and what that meant to their relationship.

### **Chapter 3: Fieldwork with the Hamilton Police and Its Community**

My fieldwork with the Hamilton Police really began in November 1999. That was when I first was hired by the Service. Working for police in Ontario means that once you are hired, you spend your first three months training in Aylmer, Ontario, at the Ontario Police College. This facility is the second-largest police training facility in North America, with only the F.B.I. Academy in Quantico, Virginia, being larger. My training as a police officer included courses on provincial and criminal offences, police vehicle operations, defensive tactics and interviewing techniques.

When I first began my role in policing, the Community Based Policing model was relatively new. Accordingly, the training in this area was limited to a few classes that compared it to the Professional Policing model, extolled the virtues of this new model and how it would help revolutionize the way in which police did their jobs. The Professional Policing model was one that was first developed in what Kelling and Moore defined as the reformation phase of policing during the early 1900's. This model was one that saw the police separate themselves from the public and politicians in an attempt to address issues of corruption (Kelling and Moore 1988:9-15). While it did help remove corruption as an issue with police and led to them being regarded as a profession, the distance created also saw the police become removed from the very people they represented. The model argued that the police were the experts and that they should not be influenced in how they deliver their service

to the public (Kelling and Moore 1988). This is also where the idea of the “thin blue line” separating the community from the criminals first appeared (McKenna 2000: 18). This was in stark contrast to what the Community Based Policing model represented, where the police were working in partnership with the community and encouraged to build partnerships with the public as a way to more effectively police their areas (Whitelaw and Parent 2006: 50-54).

After three months at the OPC, I returned to the Hamilton Police, where I began a three month period of training with my training officers. As I have come to observe with the majority of recruits fresh from the college, one of the first things told by their training officers is that they are to forget most of what they have learned at the OPC (Ontario Police College). The reason for this is twofold. First, OPC does not teach recruits what each individual service policies dictates in terms of how the officer will handle a matter. While policies and procedures do not supersede the Criminal Code of Canada or other pieces of legislation, they do serve to direct the individual officer in how they should approach specific situations. Learning things strictly through the OPC’s view means that officers do not know the ways in which their Service<sup>12</sup> will handle matters in terms of who does investigations and how they will be reported and prepared for court.

The next reason that recruits are encouraged to forget what they learned is that the OPC is unable to give the benefit of dealing with real people.

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<sup>12</sup> Under the lexicon of the Community Based Policing model, many policing agencies changed their names from ‘Police Force’ to ‘Police Service’ in an attempt to move away from the Professional Policing model to the CBP’s premise of partnership.

Recruits at the College work in theories and try to embrace those theories through a series of group exercises that often involves scenarios. Practice of these theories is done through interaction between recruits acting in their future roles as police officers and as members of the general public. The one thing that this action does not give is experience in real world situations. As a recruit, my training was drastically different once I left the college. Individuals that interact with the police do not act in the same way as a recruit acting like a shoplifter or victim of domestic abuse. While the theory and practice at the college is tremendously important in preparing the new officer, the three months in Aylmer is not the end of the training.

From conversation with training officers in both Hamilton and other Services in the province of Ontario, I learned that it is generally believed that an officer is not fully trained until they have approximately five years on the job. For police, it is experience and exposure to different types of incidents that form the police officer. This experience builds as police officers move through their career. The knowledge that can be gained from experience, both direct and through the sharing of stories from others allows the recruits to bond with their fellow workers and seems to create a platform from which they can build their own careers. It also appears to be a holdover from the Professional Policing model (see p. 29 above).

While I am the first to argue that officers that do not try to expose themselves to as much 'policing' as possible do not gain the benefit of experience and do not properly train themselves for the future, there is more to

it than that. The idea that the officer can only become a true officer through experience is a throwback to the Professional Policing model. It puts an emphasis on the actions and not the thought process. In other words, it can risk telling the officer that the police know better than the trainers and administrators that have helped get them to where they are. If not tempered with an inclusive view, it will mean that the officers could begin to look at themselves as separate from the community. After all, who knows better than the police? It is this thought that put the police in the position they were in during the 1960's and 70's and that led to the creation of the Community Based Policing Model. As I would see in my research, it is this opinion of police, while necessary, that also creates tension with the CBP model that they are expected to embrace.

Over the course of my career, I have been lucky to receive a large amount of training and experience. The training has ranged from the writing of search warrants to being able to make recommendations in terms of crime prevention through environmental design. This training was my first real exposure to Community Based Policing training, but as I continued through my career I would realize that almost all training police receive could be argued to be CBP based in some way. Be it stopping a recognized problem, building relations with an identified group or ensuring that an individual is successfully prosecuted in the courts, virtually everything a police officer does affects the community in some way. Part of this research was meant to see if the people I work with see their careers in the same way, with the CBP model permeating everything they do.

This research was made substantially easier by my status as a police officer. With the opinion questions I was asking and the need for the officers to believe that their identity was going to remain anonymous, it was important that they trust me. Monique Marks commented as to how closed a society the police truly are. She refers to Steve Herbert and his work with the Los Angeles Police Department and points out that if police researchers do not “take account of, and work with, existing police normative orders, then they will be met with significant and perhaps crippling resistance” (Marks 2004: 866).

While I do not believe I was met by any real resistance, I was surprised by some of the issues that appeared during my research. My first issue came with my realization that I had to be careful with what was said. Being an insider gave me access to a tremendous amount of information, both actual and opinion based. This access to information meant that I might become privy to something that a normal researcher would not. If the data I received was not of a sort that made the Hamilton Police Service look good, what would I do? As a researcher, I was obligated to ensure that the data was honestly represented. As a police officer, I had to consider that the rest of my career could be influenced by this research. I was forced to make a decision regarding this even before I started my interviews.

I realize that there will be critics to what I have written. There will be academics that feel that as a police officer I have been unable to separate myself enough from the Service to ensure an unbiased view of the relationship that exists between the Service and the community. Likewise, I am sure that there

will be other police officers that either feel I was too hard on the Service and was trying to push through an agenda *or* there will be those that feel I was too soft on the Service in order to further my career. What is important to remember is that this is not a regular bit of research that is done for a policing agency nor is it a purely academic exercise done by an outside observer.

Police Services are routinely using quantitative analysis to determine how successfully they do things. Figures are constantly sent to Statistics Canada to be compared with other agencies across the country. I have found over the course of my career that quantitative analysis is not an accurate representation of how things actually are.<sup>13</sup> Numbers regarding break and enters can be altered if some of those events are reported as mischief. The police are aware that the statistics that they generated can be skewed, with officers of all ranks questioning the validity of such data. With that being said, this research will attempt to look at the police through a more qualitative view. As an officer, I am in a good position to understand how the Service I work for operates. As I said earlier, there will be criticism from those in academia as well as within the policing field, as to the results of my research. This research is qualitative in nature. It is not meant to be the sole volume on policing and the Community Based Policing model. What it is, is a stepping stone for debate and future research. The goal is not to criticize or defend, but to better understand where we are and to hopefully improve for the future.

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<sup>13</sup> Even a report concerning a community survey for the Hamilton Police from 2002 could be questioned as to its validity due to its strictly quantitative element.

## Research and the Hamilton Police

Given the constraints of both my academic and work schedules, I was forced to set research parameters that would be realistic. It is important for me to state that the results I have found during the course of my research are not meant to be a complete representation of the state of policing, but of policing as I have seen it in Hamilton. As my work in this field has progressed, I have realized that there is enough data for not only my Master's thesis, but also for a Doctorate and more. It is my opinion that policing and the relationship between services and the community need to be researched more thoroughly, especially by anthropologists and police officers in the future (Moore 2008).

In the initial preparation for my research, I decided that approximately 25 interviews would be sufficient for the type of research I was conducting. This would represent approximately four percent of the sworn members of the Hamilton Police Service (Hamilton Police Service 2009). When my proposal went for ethics review before the University of Waterloo's ethics review panel, it was decided that the research would use fewer participants if a pattern was observed in the results.

In the end, fifteen officers volunteered to participate in my research. Initially, it was thought that more officers would be needed to get a comprehensive understanding of the Community Based Policing model and the Hamilton Police Service. What I found, however, was that the fifteen participants seemed to provide predictable results. The fifteen participants

represent approximately two percent of sworn staff. While this does seem to be a small number in terms of research data, participant observation and sharing of information during ordinary conversation also occurred. This helped to produce a data-set that was more rounded and comprehensive.

The recruiting of participants for structured interviews began in May 2008, with me speaking to the Chief of the Hamilton Police Service, Chief Brian Mullan. Chief Mullan was approached and the purpose of my research explained. Following that, a presentation was made to the Senior Officers outlining the goals of the research and the theories involved. I was surprised by the initial response from many officers of the higher ranks, who would become visibly nervous with the mention of Gift Exchange. Many of them took it to mean that the police service was acting inappropriately and accepting bribes. In one instance, I was asked if I would be able to re-title the theory so that it did not give the wrong impression of the Service.

In fact, even Mauss accepted that the concept of the gift exchange appeared to be bribery and was not the same as the bureaucratic society he wrote for. While it was not the same he did however believe that the model was at the basis of all human concepts of exchange, whether money was used or not.

In his introduction to *The Gift*, Mauss explained that he aimed:

To describe the phenomena of exchange and contract in those societies that are not, as has been claimed, devoid of economic markets – since the market is a human phenomenon that, in our view, is not foreign to any known society – but whose system of exchange is different from ours...as we shall note that this morality and organization still function in our own societies, in unchanging fashion and, so to speak, hidden, below

the surface, and as we believe that in this we have found one of the human foundations on which our societies are built (Mauss 1990 [orig. 1922]: 4).

Bribery does not always indicate a level of corruption. Elizabeth Eames found that in order to work with Nigerian bureaucracy, a level of bribe was required. She referred to this as “patrimonial domination”, where it was the relationship that was the stepping stone to access information (Eames 1990). That did not necessarily mean that the society was corrupt. What Eames in fact found was that Nigerian society worked in such a way that personal relationships were part of all personal interactions and to do so would be anti-social. The negative connotation of the bribe in this case is actually a bureaucratic view.<sup>14</sup> Likewise, Herzfeld also found that this informal relationship through transactions, including bribes but also including less obviously transgressive exchanges, like meals and drinks, or simply mutual understanding, was the way in which bureaucracy functioned in Greece. In Greece, the police are faced with a number of issues in terms of corruption. As argued by Herzfeld, this corruption is part of cultural intimacy in that the community knows how to get things done that an outsider would not. This way of “getting things done”, however, is something that means there is a two tiered system, where those with the knowledge of what is required and have the resources to provide it are the ones that receive the policing (or more likely can avoid receiving it). While it can get carried away, as it sometimes does in

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<sup>14</sup> It could also be argued that this view is also a capitalist view, as the concept of capitalism is inherently opposed to the concept of gift exchange.

Greece, the cultural intimacy is something that actually binds the community together with the police and in a sense builds their relationship (Herzfeld 1997).

This is something that is very close to what occurs in the Community Based Policing model and must be addressed, not only by researchers studying the model, but police services as well. As pointed out by Stephen Mastrofski, the CBP model gives the community a sense of entitlement that they did not have before. Mastrofski argues that the quality of policing that the model had before is not something that all communities had access to in the past. He states that lower income communities, under this model are now receiving policing that previously was really only given to the higher income areas (Mastrofski 2006). This higher level of policing means that the communities and the police must foster a relationship somehow. If the ways in which that relationship can be built are not clearly defined and the levels of participation needed are not also clearly defined, then there is a risk that certain levels of bribery may begin to appear as reciprocation for the gift.

This risk of bribery means that there is a potential that the Community Based Policing model will further create a two tiered system of policing, if not applied properly. This is even more important due to that fact, that as William Greenway argues, crime or problems in a community is largely dependent on social class and economic standing (Greenway 1978: 227). As such, the police must recognize that their resources will not necessarily be extended the same in each community and also that while not given the same, they must still be at an equal level.

In order to build the relationship with the community, Services must make themselves more accessible not only to receive comments and concerns, but also thanks from the citizens they protect. The risk with the model, however, is that the communities with higher levels of resources may begin to “thank” the police in a more sought after way than those areas with few or limited resources. What the police must therefore do is set out what is considered a way to say thanks and ensure that all citizens have the ability to provide it.

Of the officers participating in structured interviews, participants were found through presentations to units, through conversation and word of mouth. Specific volunteers were not sought after, as it was felt that having officers volunteer of their own free will would allow for the expression of police communication. If the police community was truly willing to communicate, then the expectation would be that there would be a larger number of officers volunteering (Skogan 2006) and that this should be reflective of the makeup of the Service in terms of experience and rank.

My presentations for participants continued with presentations being made to patrol officers during their shift briefings. In June 2008, structured interviews with participants began. The interviews consisted of an approximately one hour interview at a location determined in consultation with the participant. The majority of the interviews took place at one of the three main police stations in the City. While offers were made for the interviews to take place elsewhere if desired, it appeared that the majority of officers, despite

their desire to remain anonymous, felt most comfortable in the buildings that they worked in.

This desire to speak at their place of employment may indicate that police are more willing to invite the public into their stations. Even the layout and design of police stations are changing to do just that (Foster 1989; Whitelaw and Parent 2006: 84). If buildings are designed to be more inviting, then the public should be more at ease to speak with the police. This theory should work in reverse as well, with the design of a building being more inviting allowing for police to be more willing to speak as well. Of the locations where my interviews took place, however, only one of the buildings was designed with this attitude in mind. I was thus forced to look at other possible reasons for why officers would be so willing to speak at a station and yet insist on their anonymity.

What I found was that their actions may also speak of the possibility of issues of taboo, exchange obligations and control. As argued by Mary Douglas, items with multiple definitions and identities often become taboo. This was why pigs were not able to be eaten and why I argued that police were not being studied by anthropologists (Douglas 2005, Moore 2008). With officers being asked for their personal opinions and not their opinions as an officer, the participants were reminded of their dual identities. Likewise, I was not only speaking with them as a fellow police officer, but also as a researcher, making the interaction with me also taboo on its own. Officers may well have chosen to speak with me at their stations in an attempt to remain in areas where they had

some semblance of control and authority and felt safe. In the general public, their dual identities would be more evident if people heard the conversation and the participants may have then felt threatened.

This falls in line with what was argued by Richard E. Sykes and John P. Clark in their article *A theory of Deference Exchange in Police-Civilian Encounters*, which looks at police behaviour with members of the public. At the time they wrote this article, they felt that there was a definite lapse in research and theory in terms of the police interacting with civilians and that it only appears “when the mutual relations or organization between two or more positions is taken into account” (Sykes and Clark 1975: 586).<sup>15</sup> What they argue is that the police – civilian interaction is predominantly influenced by the fact that the police are of a higher social class than the general public. They explain that it is not that the police are better than the public, but that they are “of higher social status than many citizens with whom they interact by virtue of their occupational role and, in many instances, by virtue of their general socioeconomic condition” (Sykes and Clark 1975: 586). On the surface, it may appear that Sykes and Clark are blurring the lines between “class” and “power”. After all, the majority of police officers fall within the “middle class” in terms of socioeconomic level. What he is trying to say, however, is that the public temper their behaviour when interacting with the police due to this higher status that comes from their role in society and the power they hold. In my own

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<sup>15</sup> While there has been more work done on how the police interact with the public, the work is not exhaustive and there is a definite lack of theory that has been generated. As argued by Monique Marks and Maurice Punch, this theory requires the increase in ethnological research being done with the police to better understand them (Marks 2004, Punch 1985).

experience, there is a marked difference in behaviour towards me when someone finds out what I do for a living, regardless of whether or not I am working at the time. In terms of my research, I felt that this helped partly explain why so many officers wanted to talk at work. With me being a police officer and also a researcher, my dual personality caused some conflict. If interviews had been given in public, we would have definitely been on a more equal footing socially. With police officers always seeming to need some sort of control (Punch 1985), giving the interviews at the station meant that they retained their authority and their higher social position, leading them to feel more at ease. This blends into my next thought, dealing with Michel Foucault.

Another reason that possibly explained the location chosen by the officers is found in Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* and Michael Herzfeld's *Cultural Intimacy*. As Foucault argues, the state has moved from trying to control the body to controlling the soul. Their reduction of the use of torture and execution to the way punishment is now meted out in prisons is an indication that the mind is more important to the state (Foucault 1995). While police are not being punished by the state and I would certainly not suggest that, one has to wonder if Foucault's arguments none the less apply.

Police buildings are extremely secure areas. Despite the CBP's desire to make them more friendly to the general public (McKenna 2006), they remain areas of secrecy and control (Punch 1985, Sykes and Clark 1975). What that means in terms of Foucault is that the station has become the area where the police maintain their power and authority. The soul of the officer, or one of

their key traits as argued by Sykes and Clark, is secrecy (1975). There may well be the issue that the state does control the officer's soul to some degree and as such, they go where they are best controlled, to the building that promotes secrecy. While I am an insider and do not feel that secrets were being held from me in my research, it may well at least partly explain why the majority of any research done with police is done at the stations (Marks 2004, Punch 1985). This is something that needs to be addressed in future research with the police.

It may have also had something to do with cultural intimacy as defined by Michael Herzfeld. As a police officer, I would be aware of the unknown written rules or policies within the Hamilton Police Service and the known unwritten rules within policing in general. I would be aware of the imperfections that are present within the policing community. If an answer was given that may have appeared inappropriate, I would be in a better position to understand it in its full context. This would not necessarily be the case with an 'outsider'. By having the interviews at the station, which are the last bastion of policing's history and a reminder of our shared identity, it could have been the officer's way to ensure that through cultural nostalgia, their answers, even if a deviation from the "proper" would be better understood (Herzfeld 1997).

In the end, I not only felt that the police were attempting to maintain their social status as I have just explained, but also felt that their selection of location for the interviews were influenced by Marcel Mauss's opinions on exchange and obligations. As Mauss argued, when exchange takes place where there is a relationship, obligations exist in terms of the rules for exchange. By

having the interview take part in an area where the participant worked and had easily defined authority, the exchange was able to be kept professional and the obligations that exist with personal exchange would not have come into play (Mauss 2000).

The interviews that were conducted with police participants almost entirely took place at Hamilton's police stations. The Interviews were recorded on a digital voice recorder, lasted approximately one hour and dealt with the officers' knowledge and opinions of the Community Based Policing model, as well as their relationship with the members of the community. I was surprised by the types of participants that volunteered for this research. In policing, as in most careers, there are those individuals that seem to volunteer for things in order to advance their careers. I was partly expecting a group of "yes-men" that sat down for the interview and towed the party line without any sort of dissent. What I found was exactly the opposite. The persons that volunteered for my researcher are typically those you could label a "cop's cop". They seemed to be the individuals that volunteer for calls so their co-workers do not have to do them. What I had found was that the officers that truly wanted to make a difference in the community they protect are the ones that seemed to volunteer.<sup>16</sup> This, in my opinion, helped ensure that the participants were not biased in their opinions and responses, as they were not appearing to be pushing an agenda or hoping to benefit from participation.

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<sup>16</sup> The thought that Community Based Policing is not real police work is something that permeates the police mentality. While the majority of officers will criticize the model in such a way, it is because they feel that it truly is having barbecues and attending parades and not engaging the community in the way it argues to be done.

As previously discussed, the Community Based Policing model is based primarily on relationships with the public which the service protects (Greene 1988, McKenna 2000, Skogan 2006, Weisburd and Braga 2006, Whitelaw and Parent 2006). The model is intended to address representation issues found in the professional policing model (McKenna 2000, Skogan 2006, and Weisburd and Braga 2006) and also as a way for the police services to more effectively provide policing to their communities.

Initially, I started my interviews off with asking the officers to explain their experience with policing and asked why they became police officers in the first place. While all stated that they were drawn to the “security” the job offered in terms of employment, they also expressed a desire to make a difference and to ‘catch the bad guy’. One of the participants seemed to express the reason for their becoming a police officer in a way that reflected the others answers best. When asked why they joined the Service, they responded: “One, I wanted a career that I felt was meaningful to me. Two, one that would allow me to have job stability and support a family. So I mean moral as well as personal financial reasons”.

I then had the participants define the model in their own words. Of the interviews I conducted with police personnel, the majority recognized that the model was not merely soccer games and barbecues. In fact, almost all of the officers said exactly that. This is in line with what was argued by Wesley Skogan, that “community policing is not a set of specific programs (Skogan 2006: 27). Unfortunately, the majority of officers I talked with (80%) were not

able to define the model in such a way that closely resembled its actual definition. As pointed out by Skogan, the model involves “a change of decision making processes and creating new cultures within police departments” (Skogan 2006:27). The majority of answers reflected that they felt the model was “a way of getting feedback from the community” but they were unable to express what to do once we got that feedback.

Only three of the participants from this group were able to express that the model required that the police restructure and that even without any defined authority that would be necessary for such a restructuring, they were able to carry out the principles in the course of their daily interactions. An example this comes from a participant recounting where the police thought they knew best, but through feedback from the community learned otherwise:

When I did this project, one of the things we did was a survey. So the example, it is if we looked at things from the police side of things, is that what we used to do we say, “Okay what's the problem in the neighbourhood?” So we'd look at the crime stats and it was an obvious problem with entries to autos - they had hundreds of them in the XXXX neighbourhood. There are apartment buildings; there is all kind of parking lots, hundreds of them. If you look at break and enters, they had 10 break and enters in an area, a 10 x 10 block area. There is maybe a thousand or 1500 houses. So okay, from a traditional side you would say, “We're going to go and attack the problem of car entries,” but we traditionally would do it in a vacuum. We're not going to tell anybody, we're just going to do it and aren't they going to be happy with us? First of all, they don't even know we're doing it; secondly, they don't even give a shit because if you did a survey this survey would say break and enters are the number one problem. How could that be? How could break and enters be the number one problem? Well break and enters are always the number one problem, because when you have one break and enter on the street, that ripples, you get a family talking to another family. Do they care that their cars been broken into? No. Do they care their cars have been stolen? No. But if they break into my home, that's traumatic and that's where in XXXX we developed crime alerts and all it

was to tell people that you've had an entry on your street. The mailman delivers it to the street, or we would deliver it to them and we'd say, "Okay we're looking for a red car and this is what the guy looks like," and whatever information we had, we put in a crime alert because that's what they wanted. That's what the community wanted. "We want to know when there is an entry on our street and we want to know what we can do to help." So I took that idea and I took it over when I was a patrol officer. I had an entry on some street, tried the crime alert and then I went back and you got to assess. There wasn't one person who didn't say, "That was the best thing," and when they rated them between one and five everyone rated a five. "That was great that you do that for us," because now they're in charge of that problem. They know there's been an entry on their street and they can look for that car. They can look for that suspect or even if you don't have any information...it's community-based policing. It's as simple as that.

This individual officer took a concept that they had initially picked up during a project and continued on with it during their patrol career. It showed that even though the Community Based Policing model argues for major restructuring to take place, it also requires the individual officer to adopt new strategies in the way they do their job. This was further expressed by another participant who felt that the model was not just the larger programs put forward by the Service, but also:

(t)hose little things that we do that make community-based policing what it is, because if we don't have the confidence of the community in what we do today, then it ain't happening. We're just going to be at loggerheads and the police will be expected to do everything and we can't we can't do everything.

Despite these comments, the general tone of the comments indicated that most of the participants felt that community based policing was a model of policing that gave the public a chance to criticize and that police services were forced into it. These officers were not aware of the history of the model being the history of the concept of the professional police officer brought about by Sir

Robert Peel. For them, police officers were still the ones with the better understanding of what the community needed and that the model was something that was more of a hindrance in the way they felt policing should be done. This is clearly illustrated by one participant's frustration when discussing the model and what it entailed:

(We) tell someone that if they (the community) see the problem to give us a call. But then they start getting calls all the time and it's annoying so it's lip service. They start saying, "You know I'm not your personal police officer. Stop calling me so much. Stop calling the police so much." So you tell the public what they need to do, but by the same token you get annoyed by it.

Also expressed was the view that the public needed to be educated and were the ones that needed to change:

I think it works well, but as long as everyone has a realistic approach. You know, policing is not necessarily a touchy feely job, right? It requires a realistic view of things and then if the police are going to make community policing, which is what I think a lot of police officers see community based policing as – is this unrealistic touchy feely view of policing. You need to educate the community appropriately. We need to have realistic expectations. You need to explain to them, you know what, this is what the government's doing and this is how many social programs you have in place in the downtown Hamilton. This is why 70 % of all federal parolees, which is one of the things I was taught when I first got hired, was released to downtown Hamilton, right, in the province of Ontario. Well that's a staggering amount of people, you know? Convicted criminals being released into one city, you don't see them being put into Oakville; you don't see them being put in downtown Burlington, right? You see them being hammered in downtown Hamilton. The majority of the public's not aware of that, right? They need to be educated and at the same time they need to be empowered to get involved. I mean the number of times that you go to something, someone's called in and said "I've seen this crime in progress", well when we get there we didn't see the crime so you go to the witness at three o'clock in the morning and they're like, "Well I don't want to give you my name, I just called. It's your job as the police to figure it out." Well you don't, but what you feel like doing is saying "Well I'm working for you and if you don't care, why should I?" Just dust them off

at the side of the street, the bad guy, and let them carry on their way. The public has to participate more outside of the realm of selling hot dogs and raising money. They have to realize that unfortunately they are going to have to get involved and it might be outside their comfort range. They might have to stand up for what's right.

This idea that the police are the ones that still know better and have to change the public's stance is reflected in research conducted by Benjamin Chesluk with his work with the New York City Police and with Ramona Perez's research with Mexican immigrants (Chesluk 2004, Perez 2006).

Benjamin Chesluk looked at Community Policing in New York City and argued that the dialogue between police and the community were "larger debates over the nature of citizenship and social order in the context of urban socioeconomic change" (Chesluk 2004: 250). Chesluk attended numerous community meetings and found that the complaints being given to the police in terms of where the community felt the police should focus their resources were often outside of the policing realm and were more quality of life concerns. The complaints were phrased in ways that tried to make it sound like they were part of the police desire for 'order maintenance. They typically, however, concerned such things as loitering and parking issues, or 'broken window complaints' that were actually reflective of the community's fear of the changing neighbourhoods as the city evolved (Chesluk 2004: 269). What this did to the police was cause their actions to almost become a pointless ritual with no point on the surface. The ritual, however, did serve to ease the frustrations of the public, even if only temporarily. It also served to inform the police that there

were other concerns of the community outside their narrow “law and order” view.

Ramona Perez looked at Mexican immigrant relations with the police in urban Arlington, Texas. Wanting to assist with the reduction in the number of loitering and disorderly conduct calls to the police in low-income apartment complexes, as well as improving Mexican – police relations, Perez sought to understand why this community was repeatedly acting in this way, despite warnings from the police. What she found was that incidents of perceived loitering and disorderly conduct were actually attempts for the Mexican immigrant community to continue with their traditional social networks. These networks allowed for the sharing of job resources, news and other items that the community needed to survive. By pointing this out to the police, they were able to better address the problem of public drinking and perceived loitering in ways that did not just see it as deviant behaviour. (Perez 2006: 245-246). By better understand the group which was identified, the police were able to better address these issues and find solutions that were longer term than many of those offered by traditional judicial sanctions.

With the basic premise of the model directing police to address what the community feels is important and when embraced fully, the community taking some responsibility for their security, comes the possibility that police are more available to do investigations and targeting of issues that they feel need to be looked at. This creation of “free time” is found with the removal of investigations for minor motor vehicle conditions and calls where no suspect

information is known, such as basic break and enters to vehicles and mischief. The fact that the officers are unaware of the fact that the model is meant to give them additional time for what they often described as “real police work” is reflected in the fact that when time is found for the officers, they typically do not know what to do with it. This was pointed out by one of my participants, who stated:

I think where we fall down, and that's not just Hamilton, I think where it's fallen down all over the place are this term community-based policing. We're finally trying to get more time for officers on the street, but we didn't tell them what they're supposed to do. We didn't instruct them with, “Okay this is what we expect you to do. If you've got more time to do more stuff, we expect you to do this.” And it's not their fault, it's the fault of us not saying, “Okay, here's direction for you to do this and here's what you should be doing.” Because for the most part, when officers have more time, they're not doing anything. To be bluntly honest, they're not doing something, they'll sit in their car have a coffee or there's a few that will give a few more tickets if it's directed to. The only time they do use it, there are a few officers that will use that time and kind of stick their heads above the crowd and you see it happening. But for the most part, most officers don't have a clue what community based policing is and when we give the more time they just don't know what to do with it. So we've kind of gone, we've come down and so that idea has come down from the top and rarely has it been filtered down at the bottom.

It is also reflected by many researchers who have looked at the Community Policing model and has been identified as a holdover from the Professional Policing Model (Mastrofski 2006:65-66, Whitelaw and Parent 2006:57).

Despite its numerous definitions, one thing that is found in all definitions is the need for a relationship with the community. Of my participants, however, only 27% of the officers talked with were aware of the importance of the relationship. While some of the remaining 73% were able to

appreciate that a relationship with the community is a good thing, they were unable to articulate the importance of that relationship being a cornerstone for the model's success. As my interviews progressed, I realized that I needed the participants to not only define the model, but also what a community was. I quickly discovered that much like the anthropological debate as to what is culture, the police struggle to define community. The participants were quick to point out that they were unable to define community as it was too broad a word. The majority of officers felt that it could be anything from the neighbourhood defined by a geographical location to one based on socioeconomic or racial parameters.<sup>17</sup> A debate ensued throughout my research as to what this meant and even the community participants had a hard time defining this.

Officers did, however, recognize the importance of communication with the public. They believed that the channels should be in place for the police to explain their position and for the public to listen. What they did not seem to understand, however, is that communication is a two way undertaking. In both structured interviews and observations in my career, communication with the public seemed to not mean that the channels should be there for the public to communicate with the police. This was found in all levels of officers talked to, both front line patrol and senior management. Of the senior officers that were talked with, the majority cited committees and action plans that would allow the public to voice concerns. The front line patrol officers cited that they were

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<sup>17</sup> This was further emphasised after submitting a cursory report on my findings on the officer's responses to the Service. The topic of defining community was not discussed in the report, but was immediately seized upon as an issue.

always hearing the complaints of the public, but felt that it was just their ‘venting’ and that nothing was going to come of it in the end. This matches Chesluk’s observations with the NYPD and how complaints would just cause the officers to shut down and eventually leave (Chesluk 2004). It interestingly also matches my observations with officers who were taking part in both internal and external forums held for the updating of the Chief’s business plan. These forums, which were held for both community members and police officers, left the participating officers feeling that despite their opinions being heard, nothing was going to change.

The responses I have seen in regards to the relationship and communication with the public indicate that there is a perceived lack of real and proper channels for the police to speak with the public and the public to speak with them. This, however, does not mean that the channels are not in some form there, but that the officers appear ignorant of their existence or unable to fully comprehend how to use them.

## **Research and the Citizens of the Hamilton Area**

My dealings with the community in Hamilton began when I first started policing. Not being from Hamilton, I had no pre-formed opinions in regards to the population. When I was interviewing to become a police officer in Hamilton, I remarked at how friendly the community appeared. This could be in part due to the blue colour make-up of the population, which put work and

family as priorities (Eyles and Peace 1990). It is also why I have enjoyed my career thus far as a police officer.

As I have observed in my interviews and as a police officer, the relationship between the Hamilton Police Service and the public is good. The citizens, for the most part, respect the police and the police, for the most part, respect the citizens. I do not feel that the two groups are strained in the way they interact. That being said, as argued by Herzfeld, I do not feel that the way in which the two groups interact is completely open and honest on either side.

As my research began, I expected that I would not have any problems finding participants from the community. With the model having been in place in Hamilton for years, I expected that the public would jump at the chance to speak about the relationship they had, both good and bad. I approached the Hamilton Police Service for a listing of the community groups that they interact with so I could offer them a chance to provide information. I was surprised by the fact that the police were unwilling to provide contact information for the groups that they interact with. When I explained that the information was solely being requested for an address to which a letter of introduction and invitation to participate could be sent, I was advised that this information was confidential and not going to be released. This was all the more puzzling to me as this information is often provided to members of the public that request contact information for people of their own ethnic backgrounds. It was also surprising as one would think that the service would want the information to be made

public so that people could know that the Service was indeed interacting with the community.<sup>18</sup>

I then moved on to the other option I had in acquiring participants, unsolicited contact. I selected twenty groups that I felt best made up the fabric of the community. They represented a broad spectrum of social and economic class as well as ethnic background. The letters were sent explaining my research and outlining what I hoped to accomplish. As I was not only a researcher, but also a member of the local Constabulary, I felt it important to address this in the beginning by disclosing it.

Of the twenty letters I sent out, only five responded despite numerous re-attempts to contact the other groups. One of the persons that responded to my letter when communicating with me seemed confused about my status as both a police officer and a researcher. When I explained the situation to them, that I was indeed a Hamilton Police Officer, the individual stopped communicating with me and did not participate in the research. While no reason was given, it coinciding with the discussion of my occupation should not be overlooked.

In reviewing of possible reasons that this participant chose to withdraw, I am instantly reminded of Douglas's view on the taboo. Having written a paper concerning the police being taboo for anthropologists (Moore 2008), I felt that the argument could expand to encompass this as well. To members of the public, I was holding myself out as both a police officer and a

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<sup>18</sup> The Service was, however, willing to discuss my research with "their groups" and ask for volunteers. The problem with the avenue was that it was without me being present and thus unable to address their concerns.

researcher. I was also offering the chance for participants to express their views on policing. These are very much in line with Douglas's argument for dual identity being taboo (Douglas 2005). I was not only the enforcer of the laws, but also holding myself out to be a friend of the community with an interest in what they had to say. This led me to question the feasibility of the Community Based Policing model, as here was a member of the public who did not want to talk. As I will elaborate on later, this was a recurring theme from the public.

As with the police participants, I allowed the community participants to choose where their interviews took place. All of the interviews took place in locations that were familiar to the participant. All of them expressed a desire to remain anonymous in terms of their identities for this thesis and I feel that their decisions as to where the interviews took place allowed for them to ensure that this was not an issue. They may have also chosen the location as it was one where they would have felt that they had more control over the interview (and me to a lesser extent).

The community participants also struggled with the definition of community. Of the four participants, the definitions provided were as diverse as the ones provided by the police. The one definition, however, seemed to catch both the inclusiveness of Hamilton and Canada in general and the difficulty in finding commonality that it sometimes creates. When asked to define culture, one participant referred to it as "the collection of different groups and different peoples who are living together within a common environment". This is a

prime example of why the police have had difficulty with this model as community can be anything and everything.

Half of the community participants were aware of the Community Based Policing model, mostly due to some previous contact with the police.<sup>19</sup> They were, however, all aware of actions done by the police to include them in the policing of their community, be it barbecues or talks to their specific groups, however, they were unsure how the model was to be applied and were not convinced that what was done was enough. For all of these participants, the importance of the relationship with the police was known. They recognized the need for communication with the police, but the majority questioned what it would accomplish.

Part of the reason for this issue with communication, according to one participant, was centered on racial prejudice. When asked to elaborate this participant, who is a member of a visible minority, stated that there were people in their community that were resistant to change. When asked why they were resistant, they replied:

*I think it just goes back to way back and I think it's something that's been embedded. I think too, that there are still issues of race even if you don't always hear the comments and the things that happened to people. I don't know how that happens in the police station, in policing, one when they are screened and they go through such a rigorous interview process. How they could get by and how they can make these comments. Or is it that the job just kind of gets to them after a while and it just comes out? I don't know but it still does exist.*

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<sup>19</sup> It is important to note, however, that all participants did report having had contact with the police and all said it was an experience that left them with no complaints.

It is obvious by these remarks that there is still some concern as to not only the community being resistant to change in their relationship with police, but some concern as to whether or not the police have truly changed in the way they do things. This was reflected in comments from other participants as well, but was largely seen to be an issue involving the older officers and not typically the younger ones that had grown up in diversity.

This racial issue was also reflected in Janet Foster's work in Britain, where she felt that issues of racial bias were partly due to the experience of the officer, but also the surroundings and the attitudes at the station in which they worked. She noted that in a station where they completely changed the way in which they addressed the public, the concerns of racial bias were less (Foster 1989).

Another issue that was brought up in terms of communication with the police was the perceived issue of the police being concerned with their image. This image was centred mainly on the police as an authoritative figure and not as a member of the community. The images of power often associated with the police, according to this participant, were elements that were not just holding the community back from truly interacting with the police, but also issues that prevented the police from feeling as one with the community. That is not to say that this individual argued for police to stop wearing uniforms. In fact, they had no problem with the wearing of the uniform, but had an issue with what came with it.

For this participant, the police were unable to communicate effectively largely due to their own confusion. This confusion was reiterated by all the participants in terms of what the police want from the community. The community participants did not feel that the police have explained accurately what is expected of them as active members within the Community Based Policing model. Representing groups that had been contacted by the police in specific outreach programs and ones that contacted the police for specific reasons, the lack of a basic explanation of the model indicates that neither side is being educating effectively as to what the police are now doing. Even with me giving an explanation of what the model was, none of them felt that this information had been properly conveyed previously. In response to a question about the Service knowing what they want from the community and if it was being requested, the following was said:

*You know something? I don't think the police, even they, know what they need or want. Often times you have the official piece, the official language of the police and the police services and the chief says this and the deputy chiefs say that and the police services say we need community to do this and the community to do that and that's the message from when you talk to the officer on the street. It's the official language. But when you talk to the officer on the street, the officer says, "Look I want to just do my job. I will be professional in what I do and I need the community to understand." But how that plays out sometimes, they don't really know, they just know that when I go out on the street I feel threatened or feel vulnerable and unless I know that somebody has my back, I'm going to feel alone in a tough situation and I don't like that feeling. So it's very hard for the individual officer to define what he wants from the community.*

When asked if this was an individual officer issue or something that was an issue for the entire service, they responded:

*In a sense, because almost I think that individual police officer may not understand what he really wants from the community because sometimes what people need. Because really it's a relationship and what people need from that relationship is to make it functional, and sometimes it's very hard to put your finger on what it needs. You know when it's not working, but it's almost like you need to go to a shrink because you need to make it work. Sometimes it doesn't really work well if you don't really know how to define it on a small scale, so if you start to look at the big scale, when you say the police services as a whole wants to respond to the community in a manner that is amenable to all their officers, if their officers don't know and sometimes the officers may have a different viewpoint as to what the community needs, because you may have three or four. For instance, if I'm working in drugs, in the narcotics squad, or I'm working as a traffic officer, I may have two completely different viewpoints as to what they need. If I am working with the street involved youth or I'm working with hard-core crime again I'm going to have a different viewpoint and I don't think that that debate has really taken place inside the police services. I think the police services defines what it perceives the community needs from it, but if you have a debate going incident to the police, an open free-flowing debate between the police services to say, "Look what is that use?" I would guarantee you would get different viewpoints from different people. But police aren't trained to have debate like that, because they're not trained to say, "Look, this is what I'm going to do. This is what I think the community needs." The debate has to go up to the officials in the police force but they wait for orders to come down to tell him what to do so, in a sense it's contradicted to say you're going to wait for orders and how to respond to community matters but at the same time you have such a good feeling as to what the community needs. We think you know what the community might need from you, so you sometimes are placed in a kind of a conflict situation.*

In the end, all of the participants felt it important for the police to identify the group that they are communicating with and talk in a manner that is appropriate and will be understood. Speaking with elders or heads of the community first in order to gain their support and then fanning the

communication out from there was the way that the community suggested that the police communicate with them.<sup>20</sup>

During my research, the Hamilton Police Service began to host forums to help them direct the way in which the Service re-worked their business plan (see Table 2). These forums were open to members of the public through various community groups within the city. Officers were encouraged to attend the forums for the public to get a better understanding of the community's concerns and forums were held for the officers to voice their concerns as well.

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<sup>20</sup> In some instances, this is how the Hamilton Police is communicating with the public. It is, however, dependent on the issue being communicated and who is doing it.

**Table 3:**  
**An example of advertising for the Community Safety Forums**



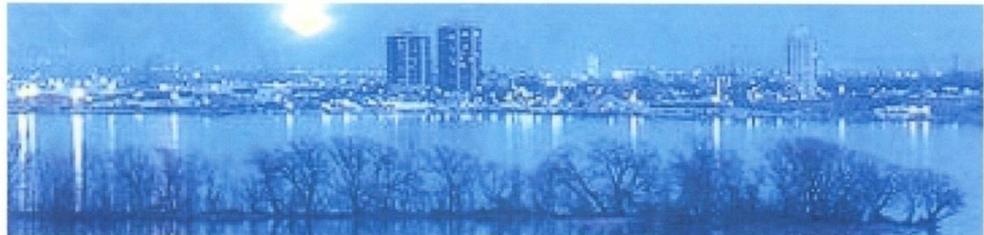
**HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE**  
*Leading the Way Together*  
[www.hamiltonpolice.on.ca](http://www.hamiltonpolice.on.ca)

## COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUMS

- *The Hamilton Police Services Board and the Hamilton Police Service (HPS) are hosting a number of community forums throughout Hamilton as part of the Service's business planning process to get input on these strategic directions – public safety enforcement, community problem solving, resource management, internal and external communication, technology and facilities.*
- *Everyone is invited to attend and pre-registration is not required.*
- *More Forums are being held in various geographic locations of Hamilton. CHECK HPS WEBSITE ([www.hamiltonpolice.on.ca](http://www.hamiltonpolice.on.ca)) FOR DETAILS. Information will be updated regularly.*

DATE & TIME	COMMUNITY	LOCATION & ADDRESS
Thurs. Nov. 6, 2008 7:00-9:00 pm	Hindu	Hindu Samaj of Hamilton Region Temple 6297 Twenty Rd. E., Hamilton
Tues. Nov. 18, 2008 7:00-9:00 pm	Business	Boardroom, Central Police Station 155 King William Street, Hamilton
Thurs. Nov. 20, 2008 7:00-9:00 pm	Youth	Boardroom, Central Police Station 155 King William Street, Hamilton
Tues. Nov. 25, 2008 1:30-3:30 pm	Seniors	Bagshaw Auditorium, First Place 350 King Street East, 3 <sup>rd</sup> floor, Hamilton
Tues. Dec. 2, 2008 7:00-9:00 pm	Ancaster	Ancaster Old Town Hall 310 Wilson St. E., Ancaster
Thurs. Dec. 4, 2008 7:00-9:00 pm	Dundas	Dundas Town Hall 50 Main Street, Dundas

•*For further information, contact **Corporate Planning** at (905) 546-3868 or **Community Relations** at (905) 546-4910*



Attending these forums and speaking with others that were present, I learned that in most of the community forums, the attendance was small. Despite advertising and notices being posted, the number of participants was not what the Service was expecting. The reason given for this was that the community tends to not attend these meetings unless there is an identified problem. In other words, a small attendance at the forums is taken to mean by the Service that they are doing things well and the public has very few concerns.<sup>21</sup> The Hamilton forums did, however, become a chance for the citizens that attended to voice specific concerns and stories. This is similar to what was observed by Chesluk in New York, with the citizens complaining about issues that were either outside of the police realm or better addressed in another location. As I will discuss later in this thesis, the attendance and the comments made could also be a representation of the relationship the citizens have with the Service.

The forums that were held for the officers were organized by seconded uniform patrol officers and civilians that work in the Corporate Planning Department. The forums were advertised on the Service's internal email as being an opportunity to help with the Service's next business plan and to identify areas where growth needs to occur. These meetings were well attended and seemed to show a good representation of experience. The officers voiced concerns about accountability and staffing amongst a number of other issues related to identified problems. These meetings were held in the stations

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<sup>21</sup> It could also indicate that the public is unwilling to communicate their concerns to the police for whatever reason.

with no supervisory staff being present. This was done so that officers felt safe in expressing their concerns and not fear reprisal. As I was leaving one of these meetings, however, an officer with more seniority was overheard warning a younger officer that he needed to be careful because there was really no guarantee that their identities were safe.<sup>22</sup>

With there being more than ample examples of exchange taking place and having an idea of the relationship (both real and imagined) between the Hamilton Police Service and the community, it is important to understand what this means.

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<sup>22</sup> This concern was even more amplified with one meeting taking place in a boardroom that was contained within a supervisor's office and individuals being specifically chosen to attend another forum.

## **Chapter 4: A Theoretical Analysis of the Research Conducted**

As mentioned earlier in this work this thesis looks at the information received in a qualitative manner. As an anthropology based thesis, its purpose is to better understand the relationship between the Hamilton Police Service and the community in which they serve. It is hoped that this thesis will help the Hamilton Police Service understand themselves better and use that knowledge to help them make informed decisions in the future.

### **Hamilton and Mauss**

Maussian Gift Exchange Theory is premised on the belief that whenever there is a relationship, any exchange that takes place between the groups in that relationship has obligations to fulfill. In analysis of the research conducted with the Hamilton Police Service and their community, I must not only look at whether or not the Community Based Policing model fits within the context of Mauss's theory, but also whether or not the Hamilton Police Service are in a relationship with the community. As mentioned at the beginning of this thesis, the model does fall within the context of the Gift Exchange Theory as the voice the public is now given is akin to an exchange of information. This voice and exchange did not take place in the Professional Policing model, which was reactive and did not strive to improve the quality of life for the community through long term goals.

Since there is an exchange taking place, we must consider whether or not that exchange is taking place within the context of a relationship. The Hamilton Police Service has protected the community in Hamilton and area for 175 years. From the interviews conducted with the Service's members, they are all quite proud of the Service's history and believe that they are on the forefront of policing models and improving the way things are done. Even the Chief's business plan was something that Hamilton was doing before it was required through legislation. But giving a voice to the community does not necessarily mean that there is a relationship. When members of the Service were asked about whether there was a relationship with the public, all said that there was in some way. One of the participants, however, argued that the relationship with the public was not where it should be, but was moving in the direction that it needed to go, "with a synergy or connection between the public and the police." This individual added that "in order to have a relationship you have to find common ground". For this participant, the Service had not found a common goal with the community in which to rally around.

The community also recognized that the relationship was not as strong with the police as it could be. In a survey conducted in 2002 on neighbourhood safety for the Hamilton Police, of 1308 participants, 67.1 % believed that the Hamilton Police Service were effective in preventing crime. When asked whether or not they would participate in trying to solve the problems in their neighbourhoods, 96.3 % agreed that they would participate. A total of 79% felt that the Hamilton Police had good relations with the public, but only 28.8% felt

that the same quality service was being given to all neighbourhoods in the city and 21.1% felt that the officers were personally familiar with the residents in the neighbourhoods that they patrol (Hamilton Police 2005). From these numbers, the question of whether or not the Hamilton Police really do have a relationship with the community begins to surface.

In order to answer that question, we should look at what was said in terms of the relationship between the two groups. All of the respondents to my interviews believed that there was some sort of relationship with the police. It is whether or not the relationship is an ongoing and continual relationship in the traditional sense that needs to be considered. The participants from the community reported that when they call the police, they expect them to come. In addition, they do not concern themselves with what the police are doing in the periods between their calls, as long as it is productive for the community. When a call is made concerning a red car not stopping at a stop sign, that is the only concern that member of the public has. They want to know that the police are doing something about their problem.

Another issue affecting the relationship between the two groups is how the police view themselves and how they are viewed by the community. Of the police that participated in this research, 67.7% felt that the police were in an equal position with the community in terms of their role and authority over the community. These officers often felt that the Service was in part, dependent on the community in terms of the way they did policing. When asked what an important element to the model was, one police participant stated the following:

*Confidence from the community in what we do and the community feeling comfortable in coming into our building and having us come into their homes or meeting rooms without it being a confrontational situation or a difficult situation.*

That confidence the officer spoke of is completely dependent on the self-image that the police possess. While the police feel that they are able to accurately portray themselves as an approachable group on even footing with the public, the public does not necessarily see it that way. In part, the community is still seeing the police as an authoritative force and not as a group that is as approachable as the police wish to be under the CBP model. Of the citizen participants I spoke with, all were comfortable in calling the police when there was a serious problem. Two of the participants, however, pointed out that the police – community relationship is not a relationship of equals, but a relationship more akin to that of parent and child. One of them stated:

*Because you always hear about giving and taking, but it's a relationship and again to go back to that analogy of a relationship between two spouses, if one spouse is always giving and the other spouse is always receiving and there is no reciprocity in that relationship, then divorce courts are going to come out pretty soon. But the police need to have that element of trust established to such an extent that they can say to the community, "I'm going to give you this. What can you give me? How can we work together and mutually share?" and I don't think that dialogue has happened. It goes back to what I said about having open and honest dialogue about needs and that hasn't happened, because the police community still views the police in an authoritative manner and when you view them in an authoritative manner you end up with a kind of paternalism. You know as a little child grow up with daddy, who knows everything, you tend to look at your father or your parents that they can work miracles and then you become a father yourself, or you become a mother yourself, and you come to see them on a more equal footing and you begin to lose that attitude of always expecting your father to take care of you. The community expects you to take care of them. The community needs to be allowed to grow and mature, and to remain in that talked down authoritative manner then as a child when I*

*am as a child, I'm expecting that parent to give me an allowance, I'm expecting through communal voice to give me all of those things. It's not a gift; it's my birthright as a member of the community, as a child to have all that. Similarly, it is my expectation as a citizen of Canada that the police will keep me safe. Is it not everybody's expectation? And until we see that it's not such a talk down authoritative manner and we allow the child to grow up, or the community to mature, so we can have a conversation like how I speak to my mother as I grew older as an equal. I'm am still the child and she's still my mother and I'm sure you speak to your father as an equal but with some deference in the level between your father at 30 and you as 10, as when your father is at 50 and you're at 30. This is going to be different, you have a different type of conversation and I don't think we have that different type of conversation.*

This does not mean that the police are not in an identifiable relationship with the community. It just means that like all relationships, the relationship between community and police must be fostered and encouraged to develop.

With that being said, since the police and the community are involved in a relationship and there is exchange taking place, what about the obligations laid out in Mauss's theory? In terms of obligations, the first two are easy to define. The police are mandated by law to provide policing for the community and a level of policing that involves the Community Based Policing model. The obligation to receive is also obvious. The public is required to accept the laws of the land as they stand and follow them. When there is a problem in terms of 'receiving' the law, the community has avenues to express concerns. The third obligation, the obligation to reciprocate was not so easy to define.

When reciprocity for any gift is discussed, unless a specific rule has been laid out as to what is appropriate under the rules of society, appropriate reciprocity is difficult to define. This is the case when a dinner party invitation

is reciprocated or a coffee for a co-worker. Reciprocity takes many different forms and while one group may think that reciprocity is being given, another may not. In the case of the police and the gift of the voice to the community, the issue of reciprocity proved to be one of the more difficult and telling problems this research addressed. Answers from the police participants varied in terms of what reciprocity was from a simple thank you, to participating actively in the way their community is policed. One officer defined reciprocity in terms of the police community exchange very eloquently:

*My view of how they should reciprocate the gift is a healthier community. A greater sense of security and overall wellness. If you have a healthy community, that's the gift, that's the gift back. It's not unlike you write a test and get a 90, there's a feeling of wow and a real feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment. What I would say is, and again this is part of the policing culture that has to change, which is why we aren't quite embracing community policing. We don't get a wow or a lift out of a healthy community. We get a lift out of arresting the guy that just did ten robberies or five break and enters, or a pedophile. That's still how we get our gift. Until we are able to understand the gift that's being back, until we have that reciprocity, until we have, that's why we don't have a properly working policing model. Because we don't understand the gift that's being given back.*

In the end, it was clear that the police had not considered how the public was to reciprocate the 'gift', or at least no clear consensus had been reached. This is despite the fact that the service has spent a large amount of money on how they were going to provide quality Community Based Policing to the community of Hamilton.

The issue of reciprocity was equally as difficult for the citizen participants. Initially, the public was just as confused as to what the police

expected in terms of reciprocity. Their answers were ones of surprise that the police wanted (or even deserved) something from the public when they were being paid to provide a service. They cited that they paid taxes and were entitled to the services provided by the police. As warned by Stephen Mastrofski, however, this model can lead to a feeling of entitlement to a quality of policing that was not provided or necessarily available before. It can also mean that the community begins demanding from the police, that which they are unable to deliver (Chesluk 2004, Mastrofski 2006). There is also a risk that if the community is given too much power in determining what the police do, then “that would again put the police in the reactive role” (Pagon 2003: 159), which was what the Community Based Policing model was created to lessen.

When the fact that reciprocity could take any form was discussed, the community participants became more understanding of the concept of reciprocity for the ‘gift’ of policing. What issue remained, however, was that they were not sure of what was expected of them and did not believe that the police were aware of what was desired either. This is evident from one of the participants who stated:

*...the community still doesn't know what you want out of them and there is a great big education piece that must go on, or else how else will I know when you give me that gift I'm supposed to reciprocate unless I have the education to do so? You know, in some countries the common practice when you're invited to dinner, they take a bottle of wine, he takes flowers, you take a box of chocolates and that has been almost the accepted practice that everybody knows and nobody needs to tell you about. You just know that's what you've got to do. So when you're invited to a party what you do is stop and you get a few bottles of wine before you get to the party. But for somebody who is new to Canada, who came from a different type of culture and environment, they*

*wouldn't know that practice. They may not know that practice. You invite me to dinner, I come to dinner. I remember I traveled in Europe as a student and I was told that when you go for dinner to someone's household these are the practices. Somebody taught me and I accepted that practice not, a problem. I made the odd social gaffe, but I think it's the same kind of thing with the police. If you have an expectation that police culture, or the culture within the whole community - maybe community is not the word, maybe the whole environment - because you have a police culture and the community culture, whatever constitutes community. And if I don't know that you're trying to give me this gift, I may not reciprocate it. I may say you're trying to do something to all of us within the same type of environment and it's that education is necessary. But who generates that education? But I think the community needs to understand why the police are trying to do with how they've actually change their model and when they've actually done this change and what are the expectations, the expected outcomes, the responsibilities of the different participants and people within the relationship. And if you don't do that, how can we know? Especially since the police, in and of itself the police services, not necessarily Hamilton because they're in such a close and closeted type environment, how do you expect me to get in there and find out what your trying to do if we don't have a level of trust? You can say, "Oh the Chief's on TV and he talked about community police saying how he really wanted to reach out to the community members," but they all say that. It has to be back dropped by genuine actions not just lip service but something we can all focus on.*

With the community not being aware of how to reciprocate the gift of policing, the next question that must be addressed is whether or not the participants feel that they are able to. One of the main issues concerning this is whether or not the public trusts the police.

### **Hamilton Police and Taboo**

As discussed earlier in this thesis, items with dual identity have been something that Mary Douglas identified as taboo (Douglas 2005). With the police having a dual identity under the Community Based Policing model, as friend and as enforcer, there is ample reason to believe that the community will

shy away from them. I found this early in my research when one potential participant stopped communicating with me after finding out my status as an officer. But the dual identity is also an issue of trust for the community participants.

All of the community participants found it important to trust the police in terms of what was being said and what was being done in the community. For them, they realize that the police cannot open up their doors and make every element of policing visible, but they still believe that trust can be developed and must be developed in order to remove the stigma, or taboo, surrounding police. One participant felt that this trust could be established through “a very inclusive approach and a respectful approach.” Another participant felt that the stigma surrounding the police was due to past wrongs and that only through continued communications would it be raised.

For the police approximately half felt their relationship with the community, when strained or when interaction with them was ‘taboo’, was believed to be due to the community’s lack of understanding in terms of what happens with police and not necessarily due to any taboo on the police’s part. Officers routinely cited in my interviews and in my observations that the public did not fully comprehend why someone was or was not arrested. They based a large amount of their knowledge on what would happen on television and not on how things were in reality. When officers had a chance to correct this, however, many would not spend the time explaining the way the legal system worked. Often, this was not done so that further confrontation could be avoided.

One participant also felt that this trust issue was due to the police patronizing the public in terms of the Community Based Policing model and not actually engaging them in it. This lack of engagement meant the community was left to figure out on their own what the police were doing and why they wanted to be friendly. Having been an agency of force for so many years, it is not hard to believe that the police suddenly acting friendly would cause the public to question whether there were ulterior motives. Until the level of trust with the police could be raised and their actions not appear patronizing, the police would have to continue appearing as taboo to the community.

### **Cultural Intimacy, Ritual and the Hamilton Police**

As Michael Herzfeld has argued, cultural intimacy and structural nostalgia is used by the state and citizens to explain the issues in the present by referring to how good things were in the past. It “legitimizes its (the state’s) intervention as an act of restoring a formerly perfect social order” (Herzfeld 1997: 109). But for this legitimization to occur, the community must be aware of what is happening in the present. For some members of the community in Hamilton, the way in which policing is done is not known. Various reasons presented themselves as to why the public was not aware of the way in which policing was done, from a lack of desire to know to a lack of information being provided. This lack of knowledge, however, led the community participants to reflect that the community was safer in the past. While crime statistics indicate in Canada that violent crime is going down, the perception of its frequency is

not (Hamilton Police Service 2005). Herzfeld would argue that such perceptions arise because the past and all of its faults are able to be more easily hidden or ignored, especially when faced with new problems. This is also because a rosy picture of the past allows people to break some rules in the present, because they can say they have to or because it's the only way to survive now, while still upholding old-fashioned virtues.

As evident in the interviews conducted with both the police and the community, the Community Based Policing model is believed to be a chance for the community to return to the safe time when neighbours were able to talk to each other. One community participant expressed that the model was a chance for them to feel safe and not “that something’s going to happen to me when I step out of my house or my children are going to be safe when they’re out on the street.”

It is not just the public that thinks back to the time when the streets were safer. The police participants, regardless of experience, also reflected on the past for police as a golden age. They cited fewer restrictions on how they did their jobs or how the police were more respected in the past. One participant, however, commented that this golden age of policing was also due to a strong community which had a good relationship with themselves and the police. For him, the social nostalgia was not a way for the state to legitimize the reasons for why the police were using Community Based Policing, as it did not need to be legitimized. While this individual reflected fondly on the way policing and the police community relationship was in the past, there is a danger to it as well.

Herzfeld found that the shared memory of a better past was a bonding element to those that shared it. That was why the Greek government pushed these “better times before” arguments when instilling their laws. When shared memories of the past are used to bond a group together, it risks shutting out those that may not have experienced those times or are not in a position to be part of the ‘experiencing group’. The end result is that the group becomes closed and as a result risks including those not in the group.

This legitimization took its most evident form during the community forums. These forums were there one time where the roles of the police and the public, or the police and their supervisors, were reversed. The forums provided an opportunity to vent frustrations and views that were not able to be expressed in the context of normal activity and interaction. Like the individual complaining about police meeting in a parking lot and not patrolling, to the officer complaining about how the wrong people were held accountable when something appeared to go wrong in the media, the views that were expressed mirrored Turner’s view of liminal exchange. As participants left the forums and returned to their normal role, they were heard expressing that they did not feel that anything would change as a result of their comments. They did, however, express that they felt better for being able to say what they did and also that they felt it was something that made the Service less authoritative. In other words, they agreed with Herzfeld, who argued that the ritual “It provides a symbolic means for creating conditions under which mutual trust...can be restored” (Herzfeld 1997: 137).

## Chapter 5: Conclusions

The Hamilton Police Service, like all police services in the province of Ontario, are trying their best to use a model of policing that is meant to include the members of the community they represent. Through my interviews with the police and with the community, I became aware that there was a lack of definition in terms of what was expected from the police and from the community. Initially, I felt that the Police Service Act and the documentation concerning the model had failed in providing these definitions. After all, it is this lack of a definition as to how the model should be deployed and what it means that has put the policing community into a position where they are not fully evaluating their concepts before moving on to the next (Reuss-Ianni 1983, Weisburd and Braga 2006: 12).

Upon closer examination of the model and after my interviews were completed, I not only found a new respect for the Community Based Policing model, but also found that the model's vagueness was its strength. Policing is different in every area, just as every city is a diverse collection of individuals belonging to different groups, both cultural and economic. With that being said, the model's strength is that it encourages the police service to adapt the way in which they interact with the community and address their concerns (McKenna 2006, Skogan 2006). What that means, however, is that the individual service must write the definitions where the model does not provide one.

Throughout my interviews, I was struck by the lack of understanding of the Community Based Policing model by all ranks and experience that I spoke with. This is in line with what has been argued by Mastrofski and Whitelaw that police embrace the model on the surface but continue “business as usual” in their daily actions (Mastrofski 2006, Whitelaw and Parent 2006). This lack of understanding means that officers do not learn to appreciate what the model can do for them, as well as for the community. What it also means is that the Hamilton Police have not recognized the need to write these definitions themselves, so that their staff can then carry it out properly.

Some of the weaknesses noted from speaking with the participants from the Hamilton Police were that they are not fully aware of the resources available to them, both in the Service and from outside agencies. Officers also do not fully understand that the communication with the public is two-way and important. The dreaded ‘public venting’ is actually the public’s way to express their concerns on a given issue. Yes, they can ramble, but in the ritual are their true feelings (Turner 2008). This ‘venting’ is also a chance for the police to show professionalism and explain their side. How often do we not explain the ways the laws work because we do not want to “work up” the person venting. While this communication may also be painful at first, the public should be aware of how we do things. This builds trust and is the key feature of the next issue, relations.

Finally, there was an identified lack of understanding in the importance of building lasting relationships with all members of the community, not just

certain groups or at specific functions. When the service approaches people, as an agency and through interaction with individual officers, they need to approach the community and ask “what we can do and who do we need to talk to, to do it?” They must also look at what is being asked of them and see what they can and cannot do from the request. Often, when their actions are observed by the right people, then the opinions are changed to better reflect what they actually stand for.

The Community Based Policing model can work. What it requires is that officers be taught to embrace it. The stigma that the model is not real policing must be removed and it must be shown to be a tool like anything else, which makes their jobs more efficient and more effective. There will be people that do not want to participate, as I found with my research. There will be groups that do not trust the police and as a result, fear and criticize them . They must, however, explain to their officers that they are not the majority or the sole holders of authority. The Service must accept that they are in a relationship with everyone they come in contact with. They must then try to define what aspects of that community, or communities are going to need the police and then they must define what services they can provide them.<sup>23</sup> Once these definitions are determined, even if they are done in conjuncture with the public, the public must be educated as to what the Service will do and what it expects back in return.

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<sup>23</sup> While this process should take place with public input, it is important to realize that no matter what definitions are created, there will be groups that do not get fully represented or are stereotyped in some way.

This will help make the obligations of the relationship's exchange more evident and lessen the chance for misunderstanding which would lead to social tension. It will also serve to help lift the taboo that surrounds the police through the building of trust and a strengthening of the relationship. In the end, the rituals that are part of the model will continue to help strengthen our relationships and ease social tensions. With the relationship strong, the exchange obligations will be more easily fulfilled and in the end will lead to what the model was made to do, see an improvement in the quality of life for everyone.

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