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Title: Question 2. Policing Communities

To what extent is the British Model of Policing, as envisaged by Sir Robert Peel, still relevant today? (5000 words)

On review of the nine Peelian Principles introduced by Sir Robert Peel in 1829, one thing resonates with me more than anything; in that numerous principles refer to the public. (The Crime Prevention Website, 2012). This essay will focus on policing by consent, and cross reference its relevance to policing in the 21st Century, focusing on the dynamics of the relationship with the public, and events that have affected it. Arguably, the public are as fundamental today as they were back in 1829, and without their presence, cooperation and consent, policing would quite simply fall apart. Within this essay, I shall discuss the subject matter of Coronavirus and how the British Model of Policing has been ever present in problem solving during a Global Pandemic. Collectively, we have not dealt with a national problem such as this before, and therefore it has shaped how the public react. Likewise, I will discuss the killing of George Floyd, and how the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020 has channelled the public to question the authorities, but in addition, allowed me to question my own understanding on the subject and provided me with an opportunity to self-reflect. I will explore the notion of double loop learning, and how this theory has been evident in my own development as an officer during the initial 18 months of my career. (Argyris, 1970's). Just as our communities contain a breadth of diversity, likewise, so does policing organisations. This can often lead to inconsistencies when officers have used discretion, and in turn, the decrease in public confidence as a result. This essay will evaluate the importance of public confidence, and the challenges faced in achieving this. With platforms such as social media, the police are under constant scrutiny for professionalism and conduct, or lack thereof in most news stories, and raises the question 'why should we trust them?' by members of our communities. In this case, it could be argued that with the progression of technology and media since 1829, that the peelian principles are even *more* relevant today than they were at their introduction. One cannot ignore that the principles outlined in the Code of Ethics, and the principles introduced by Sir Robert Peel have their similarities. (College of Policing, 2014). I will discuss within this essay benefits and dangers of heuristics, a theory introduced by Herbert Simon in the 1950's (Cherry, 2021). I will explore how utilising heuristics is effective when one does not digress too far from the principles that are outlined above.

"The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police actions" (The Crime Prevention Website, 2012). This is the second listed principle set out by Sir Robert Peel. As an organisation, it is important to maintain a relationship with the members of public, in order to deter and prevent crime. If this was not of importance, then why else would roles such as Community Support Officers and designated Neighbourhood teams be introduced? These roles have allowed the communities to feel a part of policing, have a greater say in tackling problems they perceive of highest importance, and build rapport with officers; which in turn instils confidence and trust into the organisation (Hough

et al, 2013). Once this is formed, members of public are far more likely to report crime, provide witness statements and material of evidential value such as CCTV and Dash Camera footage. These are materials which allows us as officers to produce a far stronger case to the Crown Prosecution Service. Arguably, without the co operation of the public, there is no case to present, or there is; but one of far less evidential value. It would be a very naïve concept to think that police organisations can police without consent. Public approval of what we do, the basis of which we do it, and essentially making communities safer for them to live in, is in effect a contract where both parties rely on one another for functionality. It is important that the public feel supported through the criminal justice system, and that they not taken advantage of and left feeling vulnerable.

The use of neighbourhood policing teams has reinforced the relationship, putting some element of power back into the hands of the public. The introduction of neighbourhood teams has meant that the public see officers on the street, can approach them to engage and report crimes. On a more local scale, advances in technology has allowed organisations to keep up to date with criminal activity, arguably to the detriment of public relations. As we live in a very technology driven world, the traditions of conversations and personal contact can be lost. With crimes being reported online, through email and of course telephone, sometimes leaves the public without any form of personal experience. Therefore, the very presence of police during patrols can act as somewhat of a deterrent for criminals, again, another Peel principle which refers to the prevention of crime. This is something that is still part of the Policing Vision 2025, so this underlines the importance to this date. From 1829 to 2025, the crux of policing remains to some extent the same. The Policing Vision states:

The British policing model, with its tangible link between citizens and police in their area through local policing combined with specialist services that operate at regional, national and even international level, is envied all over the world. We want to maintain this valuable policing effect whilst adapting to changes both to communities and to public expectation of the police service (National Police Chiefs' Council, 2016).

This underpins the concept, that although policing will inevitable adapt to meet new challenges and barriers, policing by consent is still a priority. Of course, policing by consent will come with its obstacles, like anything else. Take the BAME community for example. The very notion of policing by consent, can only be of success, if the community feels represented and their voices heard. Lack of diversity in the Police force can be an indicator for lack of crime reporting and is something which is prevalent more than ever with 92.7% of officers being white, and just 7.3% from BAME communities as at January 2021. (Gov.uk, 2021). We are able to identify this and make the changes as discussed above with recruitment drives supporting applicants from the BAME community, along with disabled and LGBT communities. This is something Gwent Police are encouraging through their positive action scheme. (Heddlu Gwent Police, 2021). This evidences to the public, that a force which reflects the community

is still of importance. A diverse force allows the breaking down of cultural barriers in line with promoting equality. However, this can only be successful if the applications are received in the first instance. Getting to the root of the problem, and thinking more broadly surrounding the matter, it is the children of these communities which will shape and form our future police forces. Education on policing, and encouragement to engage will break down any preconception on policing that these children may have experienced. This is where officers such as Community Support Officers can really be of benefit with talks in schools, local community clubs etc. These officers' main role is their community engagement, and to host things such as police surgeries, where they can feed back the concerns of the community. Policing locally in this manner, means that we are addressing the key issues and tailoring our approach to meet the needs of the public, again, maintaining that public and police relationship which is so very vital. Transferring policing powers away from the Government, who quite frankly cannot compete with the local communities in terms of knowledge and understanding of their area, may have been the most important reform in recent legislation.

Quite often, members of the public will only see police presence as a reaction to a dynamic incident, where officers cannot afford a great deal of time to build rapport and relations within the community, especially where the incident is an emergency response and the threat, risk and harm threshold is met. This can be detrimental somewhat to the relationship between public and police. However, the term "approval" is paramount here. The dictionary will say it is "the feeling of having a positive opinion of someone or something" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2021). Police rely on the public to "approve" their actions to allow them to fulfil the duties needed to deal with the situation at hand. By this I mean, provide cooperation, allowing them space to conduct enquiries, and not provide barriers/ distractions in doing so. Having said that, this is a two-way relationship and officers cannot be expectant of the public to approve actions, if the actions are representative of principles that steer from the Code of Ethics. The public need to witness that police actions are legitimate, fair and proportionate. The excessive use of force is one of the many factors in why the public may lose faith in the organisation.

This leads on to the next barrier in public approval and policing by consent; and that is the use of media and social media; something which is undoubtedly used now in everyday life. Take the death of George Floyd for instance. Members of the public filmed the incident from their mobile phones, capturing the very moment that George Floyd was murdered by an American Police Officer. They clearly felt the use of force was unjust in order to start recording in the first instance. The media captured an officer murder a member of public whilst on duty from excessive use of force. A peelian principle will say to use force to "the extent necessary" and by abusing the powers given to him as an officer, the aftermath of this incident was worldwide. (Crime Prevention Website, 2012). This solidifies the notion that the police are members of the public but in uniform, as it evidences that officers are not exempt from facing the Criminal Justice System following offences committed by themselves, whether on or off duty. The power of social media meant that this incident was televised worldwide, and the

lack of approval and consent by the public toward the conduct of one officer led to a whole new level of conflict; the Black Lives Matter protests. Of course, this has not been the first incident which has resulted in mass protests, however, this incident felt like a catalyst to get the nation talking about the issue. The fact that Derek Chauvin has now been found guilty of George Floyd's murder arguably reinstates public confidence within the authorities as he has been held accountable for his actions and was not exempt from the law. However, between the date of the incident and reaching that outcome, public perception of police authorities had been tarnished. All the steps taken to represent diversity in policing, and promoting equality seemed to be undone by the actions of one officer. By wearing that uniform Chauvin was a representation of the authorities, and it seemed we were all tagged as racists from the actions of one person. We are hired to protect the public, and his actions were televised and broadcast doing the exact opposite. So why wouldn't the public lose confidence in policing? Contrary to the above and the media having an adverse effect on public confidence, it has been beneficial in many aspects. Policing in the 21st century means adapting to the times and being current. Therefore, many forces utilise social media in order to keep the public updated on the outcome of crimes, operations held and their crime rates, and by circulating missing persons or wanted persons on their social media accounts. Again, giving the public a role to play within policing, actively getting the community involved, after all, making the communities safer will be of benefit to them, so why would they not want to help.

Speaking from my own experience, working in a multi-cultural community such as Newport, comes with its challenges. Following the above incident, I experienced a sudden shift in policing where naturally communities were filled with anger towards the authorities. It felt as though any use of force against a black male/ female would undoubtedly be questioned by the community, and even though I would be acting in accordance with the Code of Ethics, within my powers as an officer, and in line with legislation, the watchful eye of the public meant I would second guess my actions. During a tour of duty on City Safe, an operation conducted on weekends by response officers to ensure the safety of the public, I made the decision to arrest a black male for an assault which took place against a member of door staff. I felt the arrest was necessary having cross referenced the decision against Section 24(5) of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (IDCOPPLAN) (Bryant and Bryant, 2020, p.194). Even though I was confident in my decision and was acting in accordance with the duties contained within my attestation and principles within the Code of Ethics, I was frowned upon by members of the public for my actions. One member of public shouted that I was a "RACIST SCUM BASTARD" which really cemented for me, that the actions of one officer, not even in this Country, had tarred us all with the same label. This was going to take a lot of resilience to overcome. Even though this was the voice of one member of public, it felt at the time that this was the views and the opinions of the world on policing and toward officers in general. I know that is not what or who I am, and the person who was being shouted at was PC 2164, not Lyndsay Davies the person. However, to be even remotely considered as a racist, no matter by whom, is disheartening to say the least. This allowed me time afterward to self-reflect. From previous research surrounding self-reflection and emotional intelligence, it allowed me to contextualise my emotions felt at the incident. The reason why it affected me

so much was that I knew I could do better surrounding the Black Lives Matter movement. Lack of understanding surrounding the concept, and lack of knowledge surrounding their history had made me ignorant to the cause. Again, does not justify being called a racist, however, inspired me to want to do better as a person, and as an officer to contribute to change. Dewey's theory of learning from reflection was prominent here. (Dewey, 2016). It evidences to me that the British Model of Policing is still of relevance today and public perception, although comes with its negative connotations, can spark a greater outcome, if officers show willingness to self-evaluate and continue to grow.

Double loop learning is a concept I have familiarised myself with during my initial 18 months as a Police Constable. Double loop learning is a development model which encourages problem solving through not only the completion of the task, but the learning outcomes and reflections of the task also. It has allowed me to shift my thinking process from being a task driven process to a goal driven process. It transpired that learning the legislation and policies contained within policing and the rights I possessed as an officer was merely only half the learning process. Utilising Peel's British Model of Policing and engaging more with the public, the community has resulted in a double loop learning process and in turn, has progressed me as an officer in ways that factual thinking alone cannot. Yes, the legislation, the policies and powers are of importance, it is the very foundation in which we police, however, being more creative with a problem-solving approach allows a look at the bigger picture and asks *why* things may be happening. Take Covid 19 as an example of this. Single loop learning within the community would be to identify the key issues, construct a strategy in which to deal with the problems and address them. Gwent Police decided that the number of calls from the public in relation to breaches of Covid-19 regulations distracted response officers from the calls of other nature. A Covid Car was then designed to deal with only Covid related calls, freeing up other officers to go about their daily duties. This was a single loop learning strategy. However double loop learning would be to ask questions surrounding why the volume of calls were appearing in the first place? It transpired, that giving the public a voice on the matter educated us as officers as to why the problems kept occurring. The consensus was, that members of Parliament were breaching rules and regulations surrounding lockdowns and restrictions, so the public felt betrayed having made sacrifices themselves to date, resulting in them adopting the same stance. This underlines the issue, that once that lack of trust has diminished from the public, the co-operation diminishes also. One would not have come to this conclusion, if not for the concept of double loop learning and the ability to reflect when problem solving. Continuing to use the notion of double loop learning against the foundations of Peel's principles on policing and adapting elements to adjust to the times has proven successful. Even with new approaches, and continual changes within policing, it could be argued that when all of that is essentially stripped back as it were, you are left with the nine principles of policing.

These nine principles introduced by Peel in 1829, unsurprisingly mirror the Code of Ethics and standards of professional behaviour as set out on the College of Policing website. One of those

ethics being “integrity”. (College of policing, 2014). As an organisation, the police need to evidence that we challenge misconduct or inappropriate behaviour within the establishment, otherwise, if we are not doing so, how can we be trusted to apply the same principle to the public. Other principles include “Openness” and “accountability” which I believe go hand in hand. The public need reassurance that appropriate actions will be taken for any officers whose conduct falls under the expected standard. In house departments such as the Professional Standards Department, and those independent from the organisation such as the Independent Office for Police Conduct, alleviates concerns and ultimately sets a precedent that the police are not held to a different standard than the standard we expect from the public on a daily basis. Police and Crime Commissioner Julia Mulligan advocated this idea and argued:

Openness and transparency are both extremely important because they engender trust. If people can see what you are doing, they are far more likely to trust what you do. And this is important, particularly in respect of policing (Mulligan, North Yorkshire Police Fire and Crime Commissioner, 2018)

Mulligan also acknowledges “leading by example” and how the concept protects the policing by consent ideology. Plausibly, the public are less likely to commit crimes, if they are regulated by an organisation who abide by the law themselves. The introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 enhanced local policing once again, after what was effectively being lost. (UK Parliament, 2011). Now, the public have a representative as such, to ensure that crime plans are followed through, the police are held accountable for their actions, and the concerns of the community are heard, recognising that the British Model of Policing is still relevant today. In addition, openness can have a double meaning in terms of openness toward the public in terms of policing, and openness to changes to adapt policing in a way that best serves its purpose. One cannot keep with the same approach and expect a different outcome. Much like the pareto principle, a 20% concentrated effort, a clear vision and plan can result in up to 80% effectiveness. (Market Business News, 2021).

With the pressures that naturally fall hand in hand with the career, making the right decision, and making it promptly in a dynamic incident can be difficult. I have researched heuristics to assist with this, along with the national decision making model and other problem-solving models which are at hand from my initial training programme. Heuristic is a mental shortcut to reach an outcome when the situation doesn’t afford you a great deal of time. The link between heuristics and the context of this essay, is the fundamentals within the British Model of Policing and Code of Ethics. Quick thinking must be based on something, with that however comes its dangers of forming unconscious biases towards a scenario. (Cherry, 2021). It could be argued, that any form of problem solving or decision model needs values and morals at its core, as without these, the decision is not being formed authentically, with the correct

intentions. Peel's principles embody values, morals and ethics, and basing decisions around these principles is somewhat of a guidance for progression. For example, there are times where members of the community (whose ethics clash with our own) need protecting such as registered sex offenders. This embodies moral legitimacy as the protection of these people may falsely indicate that we support their actions, but that is not the case. The principles of Peel, and code of ethics apply to *all* and no prejudice should steer that in one way or another. The danger of "police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties" is that much like the public, you will have a variety of characteristics and experiences which shape and form morals (Crime Prevention Website, 2012). With morals being a positive catalyst to the use of heuristics, likewise, lack thereof places an officer in dangerous territory. Officer discretion can evident the morals of the officer as it is utilised as a professional judgement whereby each officer will hold their own "art" in doing so if used correctly. (Bryant and Bryant, 2020). However, in some instances, discretion can become discrimination which is where the confidence can be lost. Arguably, no amount of training can instil this, and this is something formed outside of legislation and policy. An additional layer to this argument, is that the public sometimes fail to see, that behind the uniform, the police are only human and inevitably will make mistakes and get things wrong sometimes. The public are far more forgiving with each other, than they are with professional organisations such as the police, and most of the time rightly so. However, one is not simply born a police officer. The training programme is a complex one, and every day comes with its own learning outcomes. This is something the public fail to compromise on, and they are not privy to this information or experience. With that, it is my opinion that all actions come down to intention, and if an officer has come to a wrong decision based on the best intentions, then that can be repaired, and lessons learnt from it. It is when intentions are tarnished to begin with is where the trust of the public is lost. The most recent incident that is at the fore front of my mind is the tragic killing of Sarah Everard. How can we reasonably expect public approval and consent to fulfil our duties, if those duties are used as a disguise in order to commit the most horrendous of crimes. Earlier in this essay I discussed how the relationship was somewhat of a contract in which both parties must honour their role for the relationship to be maintained, it seems in incidents such as this, Sarah Everard maintaining that contract by listening to an officer of the law, and placing trust in his actions, cost her her life. (BBC News, 2021). Essentially one that trust is broken, all the hard work of promoting policing by consent and championing the ideologies of Peel, are plummeted back to the very beginning.

Albeit, the above resonates how the Peelian Principles are relevant in modern day policing however the role in which the police would have played in the community in 1829 to 2021 has no doubt differed. The expression that police officers wear many different hats derives from the fact that the modern-day officer is far more complex now than ever before. With social public protection units, victim support hubs, cybercrime departments, we are far more sophisticated than the 1829 basic mission, "to prevent crime and disorder". (Crime Prevention Website, 2012). Yes, that statement still stands, however, there are many layers to the missions of police forces which have developed over the years. It could be argued that this is the case for each principle on its own merit. That the principles are still of relevance, but

perhaps they need adapting and modernising so that they are not generic in terms of objectives. Questionably the main reason people join the police force is to fulfil that basic mission set out in 1829, however, the variation of roles and responsibilities may be the reason they choose to stay. Even with Lord Stevens' reconceptualization on the principles, it could be argued that the principles need reviewing every so often, to ensure that they are current and serve their purpose to modern day problems. Loader (2014) identifies the importance of having principles as guidance to govern what we do and how we do it, however, identifies the peril of not updating such principles as they may become "insufficient to the challenges of urban policing today".

The ideology of policing by consent contained within Sir Robert Peel's British Model of Policing *is* relevant today. A good working relationship between the public and police will benefit both parties in keeping communities safer. Of course, with that comes barriers and tribulations as historical events have proven thus far. With the murders of George Floyd and Sarah Everard, both at the hands of police officers, ensuring public confidence in policing has been difficult. This is a relationship that will forever be affected by events throughout time, however, since 1829, on policing with the peelian principles, and most recently the code of ethics as the most prominent of guidance, I believe the trust can always be reinstated. When the world is faced with events such as coronavirus, a global pandemic and such a time of uncertainty, the public turn to the authorities for guidance on what to do. Evidently, it is not something which has been dealt with in the 21st Century, and what the public need to be patient with, as much as it is the unknown for them, it is for us from a policing stance also. Encountering such problems allows for problem solving on a greater scale than ever before, and one thing I have experienced is that at the heart of any problem-solving model are ethics and morals. It could be argued that although the principles introduced by Peel are still relevant, the generalisation on some may be too widely interpreted by its reader. For example, what one person may find as "necessary", another may not. That is where impartial agencies such as Independent Office for Police Conduct, and in-house standards departments are utilised. Any decision-making principle whether utilising the art of heuristics or a professional judgement such as discretion, need to be based on something. In order to continue to seek public approval of police actions, it is our responsibility as officers not to abuse such discretion, and to justify and rationalise discretion against the code of ethics and legislation. Lastly, the public will always hold the authorities to a higher standard, and officers who wear that uniform will not be naïve to that fact. With the uniform comes a responsibility which must be upheld, and public perception of the police will either help or hinder a case. All in all, it is a process; a process of trial and error in what works in policing and what has not served a purpose. With continual reviews of how policing is advancing in line with the current times, and introducing concepts to match those needs, one thing is very clear; the police *are* the public, and the public *are* the police.

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