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# Confidence Through Consultation: Lessons from Northern Ireland's DPP/PCSP Model

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CONFIDENCE THROUGH CONSULTATION:  
LESSONS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND'S DPP/PCSP MODEL

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for a Master of Arts in Conflict Transformation at SIT Graduate  
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Date: 4/10/2016

*For my parents,  
who taught me not just to learn,  
but to love learning.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

This project presents a case study of Northern Ireland's District Policing Partnership (DPP)/Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) model. The case study relies on analysis of statutes, government reports, public perception surveys, and governing documents, as well as relevant literature and scholarship. Through analysis of its structure, function, and efficacy of the model, key features of the model will be identified. These key features fit into the three conceptually distinct, but functionally inseparable, threads: buy-in, influence, and composition. The ways in which these three threads interact and impact the legitimacy of the model will be explored, as well as how they impact potential adaptation of the model. The paper will conclude with three critical questions that must be considered when attempting to adapt the DPP/PCSP model for use elsewhere.

## **Introduction**

Beginning in summer 2014, a number of high-profile cases involving the deaths of young black men at the hands of the police in communities throughout the United States has brought renewed scrutiny to the relationship municipal police forces have with minority communities in this country. A national dialogue has been reignited about what, if any, changes can be made to the ethos and methods employed by police forces to repair this relationship. Sitting at the heart of this issue is a dearth of trust between minority communities and local police forces, stemming undeniably from historical and contemporary policies that upheld structures of white supremacy causing inequitable dispensation of justice. Though certainly a daunting task, roadmaps to effectively rebuilding confidence in the police can be found through examination of strategies implemented in other regions that have experienced entrenched, protracted identity conflict.

One of the most poignant and applicable examples to the current community relation issues faced by police forces across the United States is that of Northern Ireland, particularly in regards to dismantling legacies of militarize, oppressive, and sectarian policing. This paper is intended to clarify the parallels that exist between the legacy of ‘the Troubles’ in Northern Ireland and the lasting effects of overtly and covertly racist policies on local police forces in the United States, as well as to highlight the potential lessons from Northern Irish police reform that might be effectively applied to communities in the United States.

One of the key strategies to bolster confidence in the police within Northern Ireland was to expand the publics’ engagement with and influence over policing institutions. Though a number of systems and mechanisms have been established to accomplish this goal, this paper will focus on a case study of the role of statutory civilian oversight bodies known previously as the District Policing Partnerships (DPPs), and later reconstituted as the Policing and Community

Safety Partnerships (PCSPs). Through this case study, I will seek to define DPPs/PCSPs as one facet in a system-oriented solution to systemic problems that exist within policing institutions. To accomplish this, these statutory bodies will be examined through the lens of Nodal Governance as proposed by Shearing & Woods (2003), as well as within the context of Systems Thinking as developed by Meadows (2008).

To begin, a broad overview of the similarities and differences of the policing issues faced in Northern Ireland and the United States will be considered. Next, we will examine the differences in police reform processes and their impacts on public trust in police in both countries. Following this, the idea of civilian oversight of police and its role in fostering greater trust between the police and the community will be discussed. Finally, a case study of the structure, function and efficacy of DPP/PCSP model will help inform three critical questions that must be considered when attempting to adapt the model for use in the US context. The three critical questions will then be developed to hone in on the conceptually distinct yet functionally inseparable issues of buy-in/engagement, composition, and methods of enforcement and influence. These critical questions are not intended to provide a prescriptive and proscriptive list of actions and features, but instead will seek to elicit further questions related to the structure, function and efficacy of DPP/PCSP-style oversight bodies.

## **Policing Divided Communities**

### *Northern Ireland*

Policing, even in an open, free, democratic society, is often a contentious issue; it is no surprise, then, that policing in a societal context heavily shaped by deeply ingrained, identity-based conflict is an incredibly complex affair. This was the case in Northern Ireland, where the sectarian legacy of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) necessitated sweeping, top-to-bottom



reforms of policing and the criminal justice system as a cornerstone of the peace process that brought an end to 'the Troubles'. Indeed, the RUC was in many ways a police force born out of violent intergroup conflict, and thus remained inextricably intertwined with sectarianism for its entire existence. The RUC was formed in 1922 following the Irish War of Independence and the Irish Civil War, which resulted in Ireland being partitioned into a 26 county Free State, and a 6 county state of Northern Ireland that would remain a full member of the United Kingdom (Moody & Martin, 2001). The RUC's direct link to entrenched conflict in Ireland formed the organizational ethos, with the force being "trained to perform not only normal functions of a civilian police force, but also a paramilitary role to counter the threat posed by the Irish Republican Army (IRA)" (Hamilton et. al., 1995). It was this counterinsurgency role throughout successive IRA campaigns, up to and including the Troubles, which would lay the groundwork for abysmal relations between the police and the Catholic/Nationalist/Republican (CNR) community.

Within much of the CNR communities, the RUC was viewed as an oppressive force whose sole purpose was to serve the interests of the Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist (PUL) community. Much of this was a function of demographics within the police force, which didn't come close to mirroring the demographics of Northern Ireland. McVeigh (1994) noted that while Catholics comprised 43% of the population, only 7.4% of the RUC's officers were Catholic. This demographical divide was certainly a result of both sectarian favoritism on the part of the RUC, and a view of the RUC as an illegitimate occupational force held by many, though certainly not all, members of the CNR community. This negative outlook on the RUC is undeniably linked to the British policy of 'criminalizing' the IRA, and indeed the entirety of the conflict in Northern Ireland. That is to say, the decision was made by British and Northern Irish government officials

to treat the growing unrest of the Troubles as a criminal matter to be dealt with by the criminal justice system. McKittrick & McVea (2002) note that: “Ulsterisation was a play on Vietnamisation...In the Belfast context this involved planning a gradual decrease in the number of regular troops and their replacement by an expanded RUC and UDR” (p. 123). This move was meant to undermine the legitimacy of the IRA, who preferred to push a narrative of grassroots resistance of Irishmen against foreign Anglo-Scottish invaders. However, this insistence on pushing a view of the IRA as nothing more than a group of armed criminal thugs backfired, and drove a further divide between CNR and PUL communities. In fact, fairly quickly following the start of the Troubles, many CNR communities, particularly urban working class, came to view the IRA as the only group willing to keep law and order in their neighborhoods (Coogan, 2002; Walsh, 2013).

One of the first major counter-measures imposed to stem rising violence in Northern Ireland in the early 1970’s also proved to be one of the greatest blunders made by United Kingdom officials throughout the conflict: internment. In 1972, after British paratroopers shot peaceful civil rights protesters on what would become known as Bloody Sunday, the IRA saw a dramatic influx of new recruits, and a renewed legitimacy it had lost over the previous decades (Coogan, 2002). Originally, the British army were hailed as rescuers and peacekeepers by the CNR community, who had be facing violent resistance to their civil rights movement throughout the 1960’s from the PUL community (Walsh, 2013); however the violent tactics employed by the Paratroopers further hardened the community, and left the IRA with 14 martyrs to utilize as recruiting propaganda. This very quickly led to the creation of so called ‘no-go’ areas, mainly in the urban centers of Derry and Belfast, where British security forces couldn’t and/or wouldn’t enter, the most notorious of these being Divis Flats in Belfast (Coogan, 2002; Walsh, 2013).

Concerned by the IRA's rapid growth, and demonstrated operational capabilities, security officials responsible for Northern Ireland felt bold and drastic measures were required to extinguish the conflict before it exploded, and internment seemed to be the best possible option.

Internment, as official Northern Irish policy, began on 9 August 1971 with the mass arrest of 340 IRA members by British troops and RUC officers during 'Operation Demetrius', and within the first 6 months of the policy some 2,400 people were arrested and detained (McKittrick & McVea, 2002 p. 67-68). The legal justification for internment was rooted in the Special Powers Act, originally passed in 1922 to combat the IRA following partition (Coogan, 2002; McKittrick & McVea, 2002) which allowed for "arrest without warrant, internment without trial, unlimited search powers" as well as other "far-reaching catch-all clauses" (McKittrick & McVea, 2002 p. 11). Internment would last only four years as official policy for dealing with the IRA, however in that short time thousands of young men from the CNR community, many of whom had only the most tangential prior connections to the IRA, were held at length with nothing better to do than receive a political education from their more radical compatriots (McKittrick & McVea, 2002). This, much like the fallout from Bloody Sunday, dramatically increased the IRAs recruitment, and by extension operational capabilities, providing an even bigger thorn in the UK's side.

Prior to the official end of internment, officials in the United Kingdom took steps to ensure the criminal justice system would remain the main tool for dealing with the IRA. Starting in the early 1970's, any trial regarding a Troubles-related crime was to be heard in front of a single-judge, rather than a jury of the accused's peers, a move ostensibly meant to avoid paramilitary intimidation of jurors (Coogan, p. 2002). This policy was coupled with that of 'police primacy', giving the RUC primary responsibility of all security operations in Northern

Ireland, essentially putting the British troops stationed there under the police's direction (McKittrick & McVea, p. 123). Throughout the conflict the RUC would continue to employ heavy-handed measures that would taint the police force beyond redemption.

Though many factors eroded the trust between the CNR community and the RUC, the two most prominent were certainly the shoot-to-kill policy and collusion with loyalist paramilitary organizations. Though frequently denied during the conflict, many in the CNR community held the belief that RUC officers, particularly those from the Special Branch, operated under a shoot-to-kill policy when dealing with suspected IRA members (Coogan, 2002). A number of shooting deaths of CNR community members, including a teenage civilian, led to an inquiry led by John Stalker, Deputy Chief Constable of the Greater Manchester Police. Though, according to Stalker, the inquiry was greatly obstructed—a final report was never officially released—it seemed to substantiate that while a shoot-to-kill policy may not have been a written rule within the ranks of the RUC, it was a generally understood operational principle (McKittrick & McVea, p. 154). Sir John Stevens carried out three separate inquiries into collusion between the security forces and loyalist paramilitaries, and in 2003 acknowledged that collusion was a widespread and ingrained practice throughout the security forces. As Coogan (2002) notes “the RUC obviously did enough impartial policing to enrage the Loyalists, the Stalker affair confirmed Nationalist suspicions that the force was not to be trusted” (p. 527).

While the RUC was not an entirely dysfunctional organization operating exclusively as a suppressive sectarian tool, its issues were still far too major to be ignored. Though not every member of the RUC was seeking to use their power to advance PUL interest and squash the CNR community, McVeigh (1994) noted it was “really a ‘few good apples’ thesis: the acceptance that there [were] a number of genuine officers but that these [were] incapable of

redeeming a whole ‘rotten barrel’” (n.p.). This view of the RUC as a ‘rotten barrel’ proved to be incredibly poignant, and by the late 1990’s the realization was made that the RUC was in no position to be the police force of a peaceful Northern Ireland.

### *United States*

Policing in the United States, much like in Northern Ireland, is inextricably linked with intergroup conflict. The history of the United States is in large part founded on and shaped by *de jure*, and arguably to this day *de facto*, white supremacy. As Balko (2014) points out, laws like the Fugitive Slave Act made the capture of runaway black slaves part and parcel to the duties and mission of law enforcement, and other laws like the Insurrection Act allowed for the use of military force to quell mass violence, mainly prison riots and slave rebellions (p. 18-19). Following the abolition of slavery, the United States entered into a period of segregation, and it then became law enforcement’s job to ensure blacks stuck to their own “separate-but-equal” accommodations and services. Unsurprisingly, following the end of slavery, racial tensions began to grow as society struggled to adjust to an entirely new socio-economic landscape. These tensions sparked the formation of various far-right groups founded on tenants of white Americans’ rightful domination over blacks, and unsurprisingly these groups often had connections, whether direct or tangential, to local law enforcement. In a 2006 report on white supremacist infiltration of law enforcement, the FBI noted that “the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) is notable among white supremacist groups for historically having found support in many communities, which often translated into ties to local law enforcement” (p. 6). This legacy of racialized policing and white supremacist domination of the criminal justice system has profoundly impacted the development of police culture, with the most direct manifestation being

the current state of police-community relations in many black (and other minority) neighborhoods.

Recent events have reopened, and indeed reshaped, the national dialogue on race relations in the United States. Following the shooting death of an unarmed black teenager named Michael Brown by a police officer in Ferguson, MO on 9 August 2014 (Currier, 2014), there has been a renewed call for real and meaningful reformation of law enforcement to combat the pervasive structural and personal biases against members of black and brown communities that activists and advocates argue has become endemic in policing throughout the United States. These popular movements, marked both by peaceful protests (Barkan, 2014; Jennings, 2015) and sporadic instances of violence (Editorial Board, 2014; Editorial Board, 2015), in many ways mirror previous movements prompted by allegations of police brutality and misconduct, such as the riots and demonstrations that followed the brutal beating of Rodney King by multiple members of the Los Angeles Police Department in 1991 (Stewart, 1992). However, this newest incarnation of the struggle for racial justice is different in that it has been bolstered every few months by another instance of questionable police violence against black and brown citizens.

The death of Michael Brown sparked weeks of intense unrest, marked by peaceful demonstrations, as well as sporadic outbreaks of violence in the form of property destruction and looting (Editorial Board, 2014). This unrest brought increased attention to the controversial case of Eric Garner in New York, who died less than a month before Brown from medical complications induced by an officers use of a banned choke-hold restraining technique (Linton, 2014). Both cases proved so galvanizing because they shared features that minority communities, and in particular black urban communities, have claimed typify their relationship with law

enforcement: officers harassing people—most often, but not exclusively, men—of color for minor offenses, and then employing excessive force in response to any provocation or resistance.

However, these issues are not new; in a 1946 survey of black community leaders in Philadelphia, G. Gordon Brown noted their main complaint was “the police’s willingness to arrest African Americans without proper cause” and the “second most frequent complaint was that police used excessive force against African Americans” (Johnson, 2004 p. 121). In the case of Michael Brown, the officers initial contact was for the purpose of getting Mr. Brown to walk on the sidewalk and not the street (Currier, 2014), while Eric Garner was approached by plain clothed and uniformed officers on the accusation of selling loose, untaxed cigarettes (Linton, 2014).

This paradigm of contact-based-on-minor-infraction-resulting-in-death existed in two other highly controversial cases of police-related deaths occurring in April 2015: the shooting death of Walter Scott in North Carolina, and the in-custody injury and eventual death of Freddie Gray in Baltimore, Maryland. Scott had been pulled over for a routine traffic stop and subsequently fled (Ortiz, 2015), and Gray was detained because he ran after making eye contact with an officer (Peralta, 2015). The Garner, Scott, and Gray cases were also similar in that there existed video evidence of some or all of the interaction between the victim and law enforcement, highlighting the role of technology in finally shedding light on this generations-old problem.

In addition to shedding light on racial disparities in policing, the protest and unrests, or more precisely the response by law enforcement to the protest and unrests in some areas, renewed the national discussion on the militarization of police forces in the United States. Though militarization of policing is a far-reaching problem that impacts, and thus it can be discussed and analyzed through a multitude of lenses, the near ubiquitous paramilitary character

of American police has undeniable links to racial issues. In his 2014 book *Rise of the Warrior Cop: The Militarization of America's Police*, Radley Balko notes that the first paramilitary style raid carried out by officers of a civilian police force was directed against the Black Panther Party's (BPP's) Los Angeles Headquarters in December of 1969 (p. 76). Even the inspiration for the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team that carried out the raid is linked to racial issues, namely large-scale unrest in black Los Angeles communities in 1964. What became known as the Watts Riots, unsurprisingly sparked by accusation of police brutality of black residents (Stoughton, 2013), crippled the LAPD and so frightened a high-ranking police official named Daryl Gates he approved of and oversaw the development of the new unit. Gates would later write of the incident in his autobiography stating "we didn't know how to deal with guerilla warfare" (As quoted in Balko, 2014 p. 53). This view of policing, especially in urban areas, as 'guerilla warfare' seems to have become inseparable from the ethos and culture of law enforcement. This prevailing notion is simultaneously mirrored and reinforced by the exponential increase in the number of SWAT teams in the United States, going from a few hundred in 1972 to over 40,000 in 2001 (Alexander, 2012 p. 75).

The factor having one of the most profound impacts on militarization of police forces, and by extension minority communities, is the so-called 'War on Drugs'. Since the 1980's, the war on drugs has made available to law enforcement an almost limitless supply of military-grade hardware, which is most often employed in urban minority communities. As Alexander (2012) notes: "the most common use of SWAT teams is to serve narcotics warrants, usually with forced, unannounced entry into the home" (p. 74). The increased use of military tactics, organization and equipment has exacerbated a prevailing warrior mentality among police officers. Stoughton (2013) notes that by continuously reinforcing the idea that anyone and everyone poses a potential



threat, police officers have developed a “warrior worldview” in which they are “locked in intermittent and unpredictable combat with unknown but highly lethal enemies” (p. 227). The ‘War on Drugs’, coupled with other ‘tough-on-crime’ policies employed during the 1980s and 90s, had another startling effect: the explosion of the US prison population. Though people of color make up only 30% of the US population, they represent 60% of the prison population (Kerby, 2012). This massive disparity in incarcerated populations is undeniably and intrinsically linked to criminal justice policies and structures designed to uphold and reinforce status quo, which often included white supremacy.

Though many obvious and substantial differences exist, the above sections have illustrated that many of the factors impacting police-community relations in Northern Ireland are mirrored, if imperfectly, in the United States. Both societies have histories of intergroup conflict, with one group dominating and oppressing the other(s) for a period of centuries. Both societies have dealt with the lasting legacy of sectarianism built into their policing institutions. Both societies have dealt with militarization of police and mass incarceration of particular communities. And both societies have struggled with meaningful and lasting reform of their criminal justice systems and structures. Though their histories with policing share many similar qualities, the reform processes carried out in Northern Ireland and the United States, for a number of demographic, historical and societal reasons, have a gulf of differences between them. The next section will explore these differences, and their impacts on police-community relations in both societies.

## **Police Reform**

### *Northern Ireland*

The Good Friday Agreement, also known as the Belfast Agreement, brought an official end to ‘the Troubles’ in 1998, and set forth a number of stipulations and recommendations to ensure a lasting and durable peace in Northern Ireland. Among these stipulations was the creation of an independent commission to assess the nature of policing in Northern Ireland, and set forth recommendations and stipulations for its reformation (“The Agreement”, 1998). This led to the creation of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland (ICP) comprising of former government officials, police officers and academics from within and outside Northern Ireland. The Commission’s report, *A New Beginning: Policing in Northern Ireland*—more commonly referred to as the Patten Report, after the commission’s chair Christopher Patten—set forth wide reaching recommendations for repairing and strengthening the police force of Northern Ireland. The Patten Report covered nearly every imaginable topic, from policing strategy, to recruitment, training and culture. Each of the recommendations had the goal of creating a fully professionalized, nonsectarian policing institution that could provide meaningful public safety for every community in Northern Ireland.

The recommendations set forth in the Patten Report (1999) are far too numerous to itemize here, and indeed many of them fall well outside the scope of this project. Instead, I will attempt to highlight the undercurrent of thought that drove those recommendations. The report notes that policing is central to the conflict in Northern Ireland because of “[failures] in the past to find an acceptable democratic basis for the governance of Northern Ireland that accommodate the rights and aspirations of both the unionist and nationalist communities” (1.3). This highlights that policing is not just a law and order issue in Northern Ireland, but in fact a central political question. This viewpoint led the ICP to understand that the only remedy for the numerous issues plaguing the RUC was a complete and total overhaul. Central to this overhaul was a renewed

emphasis on the role of human rights in policing, with the ICP going so far as to recommend in section 4.7 that “a new oath [should be] taken individually by all new and existing police officers, expressing an explicit commitment to upholding human rights.” (4.7). This emphasis on human rights was born out of an acknowledgement that previous policing structures had, by design, limited the social and political freedoms of the CNR community. This limit on freedoms led to an erosion of trust between the CNR community and the police, and thus a remedy would by necessity require the mending of that trust.

Indeed, the ICP noted that “[i]n a democracy, policing, in order to be effective, must be based on consent” (5.2) and that “[t]he public have not been able to hold the police accountable through their democratically elected representatives, as should happen in a democratic society” (5.5). This understanding highlights the interrelated nature of consent, legitimacy, and accountability that underlies a majority of the Patten report recommendations. Indeed, the idea that the citizenry should not just be passive recipients of policing services, but instead should be actively engaged in the creation and implementation of effective policing policies, is embodied quite clearly in the recommendation on which this project focuses: the District Policing Partnerships (DPPs). Though they will be discussed in greater detail later, the DPPs were intended to be the “focus of public consultation at the district level” (6.31) to serve as a conduit to relay the views and concerns of the public to the District Councils, as well as the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB). Thus, the DPPs were meant to serve a central role in creating lasting reform through the engagement and empowerment of the entire community of Northern Ireland to have their views and concerns taken into account with regards to policing policy.

The ICP was of the opinion that “The problems faced by the police service in Northern Ireland are in a sense unique to a divided society, with its own particular history and culture. But

many are similar to those confronting police services in democratic societies elsewhere.” (1.5), and thus one would believe their recommendations for reform would be applicable, although certainly in modified form, in many other contexts. Indeed, Ellison & O’Reilly (2008) notes that police reform in Northern Ireland is “hailed as an example of successful policing transition; a model to be lauded and emulated on the international stage” (p. 332) leading to “phenomenal outward traffic of Northern Irish policing personnel to overseas conferences and symposia, as well as increasing their participation in international missions” (p. 338). However, despite the tendency to applaud the effectiveness of reform in Northern Ireland, it has also been noted that the success are more readily visible in an structural and organizational sense, and not necessarily as visible in terms of holistic engagement with all communities (Ellison & O’Reilly, 2008). This could, in many ways, be linked to other reforms that occurred within Northern Ireland that were not directly related to policing, but nonetheless had a substantial impact on it. Chief among these, particularly in regards to the DPPs, is the consociational arrangement that has been implemented within the political structures of Northern Ireland. By virtue of their connection to the District Councils, the DPPs and PCSPs are directly impacted by “institutionalized divisions” that accompany consociational power structures (McGratten, 2013 p. 106), which can in some ways limit their capacity.

With a generally positive perception of policing throughout Northern Ireland—including the CNR community—it can be said that the ICP reforms have been at least partially successful. A number of factors unique to Northern Ireland played a role in creating the conditions for success. First, the relatively small population allowed for widespread consultation. Second, the RUC existed as one force that could be easily overhauled top-to-bottom into the PSNI. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, 30 years of bombs, bullets, and bloodshed fostered the political

will necessary to ask and answer the tough questions regarding policing, its role in the conflict, and its future in Northern Ireland. The next section will illustrate how reform processes took very different form in the United States, often due to a lack of the conditions just noted.

### *United States*

Despite the similarities highlighted regarding the nature, scope, and cause of police-community relations issues faced in Northern Ireland and the United States, the two societies have taken very different steps to remedy the difficulties. At roughly 321 million (Central Intelligence Agency, 2016), the population of the United States is well over 100 times the size of Northern Ireland's population (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 2016). In addition, the policing scheme within the United States is highly decentralized, a unique characteristic that has proven time and again to be both a blessing and a curse.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, there were over 12,000 local law enforcement agencies operating in the United States in 2008. In addition, there were approximately 3,000 sheriffs' offices, 1,700 special jurisdiction agencies, and 50 primary state law enforcement agencies (Reaves, 2011). Given the ICP in Northern Ireland had only one institution to examine and reform, providing broad, overarching recommendations was a doable, if not daunting, task. The same cannot be said for the United States, as analyzing and understanding the defining particularities and characteristics of the local context of roughly 16,750 law enforcement agencies is a near impossible feat, and would surely prove prohibitively expensive. Despite this, some reform processes in the United States have taken the form of commissions on the local, state and federal level.

One of the first commissions set up to examine policing in the United States was the Wickersham Commission, which in 1931 issued the *Report on the Enforcement of the*

*Prohibition Laws of the United States* which highlighted the negative effects prohibition had had on policing. In 1967, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice released its final report: *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society*. The report provided a comprehensive overview of the state and nature of crime and the criminal justice system within the United States, and concluded, much like the Patten report, with a number of recommendations for state and local agencies. Despite President Johnson proclaiming in 1965, when he addressed congress to announce the creation of the commission, that "[l]aw enforcement cannot succeed without the sustained—and informed—interest of all citizens" (Johnson, 1965), few, if any, of the recommendations set forth in the report could be argued to be primarily, or even secondarily, focused on proactively and positively engaging the citizenry (President's Commission, 1967). The commission set up by Johnson in 1965 had the task of examining policing, and indeed the entire criminal justice apparatus, as a whole throughout the United States; however, most commissions established in the United States have been in response to critical incidence.

These critical incidences often took the form of race riots, with most stemming from issues of police brutality; in fact, Stoughton (2013) notes that "of the ten most destructive and violent riots in United States history, fully half were responses to perceived police abuses" (p. 230). These include the 1965 Watts Riots, examined by the McCone Commission, the 1967 Detroit Riots, examined by the Kerner Commission, and the 1992 Rodney King Riots, examined by the Webster Commission. Each of these commissions, by necessity, had a much more narrow scope than the President's Commission, and thus were more focused on understanding the critical incident, its causes, effects and potential steps, including reform, that could be taken to mitigate or eliminate the potential for a similar incident in the future.

While the use of commissions as a vehicle for reform is noted in the United States, more often it has been the judiciary which has played the most forceful and effective moderator of police behavior, and by extension police culture. Supreme Court decisions in a handful of key cases have played a significant role in molding and shaping police behavior by defining the constitutional limits to police authority. Chief among these are *Mapp v. Ohio (1961)*, which reaffirmed protections against unreasonable search and seizure as guaranteed by the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment; *Miranda v. Arizon (1966)*, which requires law enforcement personnel to ensure a person being taken into custody understands their rights; *Terry v. Ohio (1968)*, which set reasonable suspicion as the basis for a pat-down; and *Wren v. U.S. (1996)*, which reaffirmed probable cause as the justification of seizure (Flex Your Rights, n.d.). While these decisions place necessary boundaries on police action and authority, because they flow from the judiciary they are, by nature, reactive. That is to say, these protections are afforded to people but only through the courts, and thus do little to protect the citizen while in the midst of interacting with law enforcement. *Mapp v. Ohio (1961)* does not necessarily prevent an officer from performing an unlawful search, but instead prevents a conviction based on evidence discovered through said unlawful search. These reforms, while providing necessary protections for citizens from abuse of police authority, they are in no way sufficient to address the issues of police-community relations in the United States. The judiciary represent a important component of our system of checks and balances, but it can not act as a vehicle to do the one thing that is both necessary and sufficient to mend police-community relations in the United States: rebuilding the confidence in and legitimacy of the police.

Recently, in response to the growing calls for meaningful police reform in light of recent high-profile incidents of police brutality, President Obama appointed the President's Taskforce

on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing, which released its final report in 2015. The Taskforce's report included 59 recommendations in areas as diverse as Education & Training, Policy & Oversight, and Officer Wellness & Safety. Building Trust & Legitimacy is given particular credence, with the report acknowledging that it is "not only the first pillar of this task force's report but also the foundational principle underlying this inquiry into the nature of relations between law enforcement and the communities they serve" (President's Taskforce, 2015 p. 9). To accomplish this, the report deems it necessary to revamp internal disciplinary procedures, change tactics employed, and find ways to actively engage the citizenry. In fact, recommendation 1.5 clearly states that "should proactively promote public trust by initiating positive nonenforcement activities to engage communities that typically have high rates of investigative and enforcement involvement with government agencies". Within this recommendation, Action Item 1.5.1 states that "law enforcement agencies should involve the community in the process of developing and evaluating policies and procedures" as a means of increasing external legitimacy. This represents a clear indication that the Taskforce views trust and legitimacy as intrinsically linked, and has identified increased citizen oversight of police as a potential tool to rebuild trust, and thus bolster legitimacy. The next section will explore the impact citizen oversight of police has had on issues of trust and legitimacy in a variety of socio-cultural contexts.

### **Citizen Oversight of Police**

Gilmour (2008) noted that to understand the nature of trust in the relationship between the police and the community they serve, one must "engage with the interrelated concepts of legitimacy, confidence, accountability, and justice" (p. 51). Indeed, it is these four concepts that have historically driven movements for more transparent and accountable policing policies and procedures. However, the move toward civilian-focused, or at a bare minimum civilian-



inclusive, oversight mechanisms is still fairly recent. One study noted that the historical trend of police oversight in Australia and New Zealand has seen a shifting emphasis, from internal oversight prior to the 1980's, external oversight from 1980 to about 2000, and final to cross-sector integrity commissions from 2000 until the present (den Heyer & Beckley, 2013). This shift toward broader oversight models was likely quite natural given the constraints of internal oversight mechanisms. Clarke (2010) highlighted the perception of internal investigative units as “biased, ineffective, and illegitimate” as the reason for a shift towards civilian oversight (p. 9-10). He notes that executive branch oversight is often muddled by prosecutors relationships with local police forces; legislative oversight is likely only when there is the political will; and that large urban police forces are able to weather costly civil settlements without much impact on their operations, thus blunting one of the main oversight tools of the judiciary (Clark, 2010 p. 4-10). Given these limits, it should come as no surprise that Walker (2005) found that close to 80% of local law enforcement agencies in the United States had some form of civilian oversight (as cited in Nalla & Mamayek, 2013); however, these civilian oversight bodies vary greatly in their constitution, scope, and authority. While most civilian oversight continues to operate on the basis of investigating individual complaints, examples from both the United States, as well as around the world, will indicate there seems to be a move away from traditional complaint-centric investigatory roles, towards a more holistic strategy aimed at mending wider systemic issues.

Having bodies in place that are able to investigate and reprimand wrongdoing is a necessary feature for policing in a democratic state. These bodies are even more powerful when they exist outside the traditional criminal justice structures because “external investigation of police complaints provides citizens with a mechanism by which they can reaffirm their social values” (Hryniewicz, 2011 p. 79). However, just because they are necessary, that does not mean

they are necessarily effective. Dunn (2011) found that an overwhelming 83% of complainants who utilized the City of Cleveland's Police Review Board "did not view the investigation process, which includes the examination of all the relevant evidence, or the Police Review Board's examination of the evidence as being thorough and unbiased" (p. 566). Interestingly, however, Dunn (2011) did find that 51% of black complainants were willing to utilize the process again despite the negative perception, compared with only 32% of whites (p. 568). This perhaps points to a view that, while the action of lodging a complaint itself might be futile, there is a powerful symbolism in engaging in the process. While complaints can be useful because they can be an "early warning system to alert government officials and police administrators to potential problems in officer conduct...before it reaches a critical stage" (Dunn, 2011 p. 569), relying solely on them can lead to larger systemic issues going unnoticed. Porter (2013) indicates a distinction that must be made between transactional influence of oversight, dependent on a reward-punishment paradigm, and transformational influence, which seeks to create change through the instillation of values (p. 170). This shift is noted in South Africa, where reforms to the Independent Complaints Directorate (ICD) moved it from solely a case-by-case investigatory role, to a more holistic 'problem-oriented' model with the power to examine wider systemic issues such as corruption as the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) (Berg, 2013). While these shifts clearly indicate a positive evolution of civilian oversight, few models seem to be focused, either implicitly or explicitly, on the depth and breadth of public consultation and influence that the DPP/PCSP model seeks to provide.

In his overview of civilian oversight of police, Clarke (2010) notes four general types: civilian in-house oversight; civilian external supervisory; civilian external investigatory; and civilian auditor. He notes that, regardless of structure, "almost all civilian-oversight bodies lack

the authority to directly discipline officers and modify police department policies” (Clarke, 2010 p. 11). The structure that comes closest to the DPP/PCSP model is perhaps the civilian auditor, which is generally tasked with advocating for systemic reform; however, none of these models incorporate mechanisms for public consultation and influence over wider policies and practices that impact how policing occurs in their locality. Pyo (2008) identified 4 general oversight mechanisms, with only two (human rights commissions and ombudsman) potentially capable of, but certainly not focused on, relying the concerns and perspectives of the citizens to appropriate departmental decision-makers (as cited in Nalla & Mamayek, 2013). Even so, these models do not provide a sufficiently comprehensive conduit for the public to express their issues with law enforcement more generally beyond particular incidents of misconduct.

It is clear that civilian oversight is part and parcel to truly democratic policing; as Hryniewicz (2011) states: “as a source of security, civilian oversight is a vehicle by which democratic principles are reinforced and readapted” (p. 82). While this is certainly true, in their review of civilian oversight and democratic policing in Asia, Nalla & Mamayek (2013) “democracy rankings are not good predictors of the existence of the values and elements of democratic policing in nations” (p. 127). Thus, we cannot assume that based on the strength of our democracy, we will inherently have a system of democratic policing. Instead, fostering and maintaining truly democratic policing is dependent on a system of multi-faceted checks-and-balances, and by necessity that system must incorporate a conduit for citizen input into policies and procedures as a central component. The next section of this paper will focus on a case study of the DPP/PCSP model to examine how it fulfills the role of that conduit in Northern Ireland, and how that mechanism might be adapted for implementation elsewhere.

## **Methodology**

A case study of the structure, function, and efficacy of the District Policing Partnership (DPP) & Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) Policing Committee model will be employed to generate three critical questions for adapting the model for implementation in localities within the United States. Each of the three areas of analysis will be informed by publically available documents and data created & compiled by official government bodies in Northern Ireland. The crucial documents being examined include commission reports, Northern Irish legal statutes, and officially conducted public perception surveys, among others.

Analysis of the structure of the DPP/PCSP model will be primarily reliant upon the *Report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland* (1999)—also known as the Patten Report—the *Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000*, and the *Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011*. These documents supplied the initial recommendation for creation of the DPPs, codified and implemented the DPPs throughout Northern Ireland, and reconstituted the DPPs into the Policing Committees of the PCSPs, respectively. These documents will provide a basis of understanding of the intention behind the model, and through analyzing its initial structure and eventual reconstitution we can begin to conceptualize how the structure informed the function. Additional documents, including guiding documents for DPP/PCSP members, will also be analyzed to provide a more holistic understanding of the intended structure and its practical implications.

Informed by the exploration of the models structure, analysis of the DPP/PCSPs function will rely upon close examination of key guiding & governing documents meant to inform DPP/PCSP members of their statutory duties and obligations. Central to this analysis will be comprehensive assessment of both the *Code of Practice for the Exercise of Functions by*

*Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) and District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (DPCSPs)* (2012) and the *PCSP Members Handbook* (n.d.). In addition, the official PCSP newsletter, *Inpartnership*, will be examined to understand how the statutory functions of the model are translated into practical terms. This understanding of the function, together with that of the structure, will lay the groundwork for three critical questions that will elucidate the fortes and deficits of the DPP/PCSP model and its potential for adaptation.

Efficacy will be examined through synthesis of the understanding generated through analysis of structure & function with new perspectives produced by examination of the *Public Perceptions of the Police, DPPs, and the Northern Ireland Policing Board* based on data from the Policing Board's annual Omnibus Survey. While data from all available years will be examined, particular emphasis will be paid to 2006 through 2015; thorough examination of this period will allow for understanding of perceptions after DPPs had time to become substantially established as institutions, as well the impact of their reorganization into the PCSPs on public confidence and perceptions.

It is important to note that the questions asked about the DPP & PCSPs on the Omnibus Survey varies noticeably in both number and content. Each of the questions has been organized into one of four broadly defined categories to help create continuity across the various iterations of the survey. These four categories are as follows: Awareness, Confidence, Engagement, and Perception. Understanding and knowledge generated from examination of the Omnibus Survey data will be bolstered by analysis of other officially conducted research on topics related to confidence in, perceptions of, engagement with the Police, DPP/PCSPs, Policing Board and other facets of the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland.

Taken altogether, our analysis of the structure, function, and efficacy will culminate in the creation of three critical questions meant to highlight, deconstruct, and examine the most crucial elements for success of the DPP/PCSP model and its potential for adaptation. These three questions will be linked to three interconnected concepts applicable across a wide range of social, cultural, and political contexts. These concepts are: Buy-in, Composition, and Influence.

### **Limitations**

This case study represents just a first step towards understanding how the DPP/PCSP model could be adapted, and thus cannot provide specific recommendations for adaptation. Additionally, logistical limitations impeded the collection of original data, and thus the analysis of efficacy is reliant on secondary analysis. While the lack of original data does pose a challenge, this is counterbalanced by the multiplicity of data points provided by the reports from the Northern Ireland Policing Board. Given the broad nature of this study, many points are raised which cannot be adequately explored but are worthy of further research. These points include, but are not limited to, the following areas: youth engagement and consultation, the impact of socio-economic status on access, and the balance of roles and responsibilities between political and independent members.

### **Theoretical Context**

This case study is intended to elucidate the lessons that can be taken from the DPP/PCSP model to understand how it might be effectively adapted for use in the United States, or other contexts that have experienced deficits in police-community relations stemming from protracted intergroup conflict. To identify these lessons, the structure, function, and efficacy of the model will be analyzed within the framework of two key theories: Systems Thinking (Meadows, 2008) and Nodal Governance (Shearing, 2001; Shearing & Wood, 2003). The key concepts of these

theories will be synthesized to create a more thorough understanding of the nature and dynamics of policing systems, and the impact governance structures have on these systems. In addition, Giddens (1984) conception of structuration theory will be used in support of these two theories.

In *Thinking in Systems*, Meadows (2008) defines the key components and behaviors of systems that provide valuable context to understanding the nature of policing issues. Particularly relevant is the concept of stocks and feedback loops. If we are to conceptualize public trust and confidence in police as a stock, or resource, that allows for more effective democratic policing, then we can better understand the dynamics that cause the stock to rise and fall. If public trust is a stock, then police brutality and misconduct represent reinforcing feedback loops, with each instance cause the stock to deplete more and more (p. 31). Left unchecked, this depletion can lead to a total breakdown of cooperation between the police and the community they serve, leading to inefficient and ineffective policing. To reverse this depletion, then, a balancing feedback loop is required (Meadows, 2008 p. 27). In this case, the proposed balancing loop would be citizen oversight of police, with a DPP/PCSP model providing an avenue for citizens to rebuild their trust in police, thus replenishing the stock depleted by brutality and misconduct.

Meadows (2008) notes “if you see a behavior that persists over time, there is likely a mechanism creating that consistent behavior” (p. 25). This means that changing behavior requires the creation of new mechanisms that regulates the behavior of actors in particular ways. This can be integrated with Giddens (1984) Structuration Theory, which posits that systems gain their form and character through reproduced relationships between actors within that system; indeed, systems are both constrained and enabled by the structure, comprised of rules and resources, within which the system exists (p. 25). Thus, the reformation of systemic issues in policing is contingent upon the successful transformation of the structures through which the

behavior of actors is facilitated. To be effective, then, reform must be focused on impacting the conditions allowing for the permanence or adjustment of the current policing system, and not just the relationships themselves. One potential avenue for accomplishing this is the creation of new mechanisms of governance and oversight that incorporate a new, more holistic conception of the relationships that exist between the actors within the system.

Clifford Shearing (2001), a member of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland (ICP), put forth a conception of policing that is very useful for our purposes. He identified policing not just as a service provided by the government to citizens in a passive consumption paradigm, but instead as a regulated network of interrelated nodes. These nodes each have their own unique combination of authority, capacity, and knowledge, which can be utilized and employed to regulate or direct the policing system (Shearing, 2001 p. 261). Thus, these nodes can be conceptualized as manifestations of the structure regulating the behavior of actors within the system. This conception of networked policing was built on further to produce the theory of Nodal Governance (Shearing & Wood, 2003), which states that effective governance is found not in the traditional state-centric model of, but instead in one that is more representative of the influence and forms of governance flowing from other segments of society. Shearing & Wood (2003) identify four sectors that play a role in governance of policing systems: (1) Government; (2) Corporate/Business; (3) NGOs; and (4) people outside the other categories (p. 405). Each of these sectors have their own conception of what effective policing, and by extension effective police governance, looks like, and each exercises influence through various nodes. No node is given conceptual priority (p. 404), and thus form a patchwork system through which the views, concerns, and priorities regarding the function of the policing system from all sectors of society. Nodal Governance also emphasizes the multiplicity of affiliations and



identities that can place citizens in multiple sectors simultaneously, which then defines and redefines their placement within the regulatory framework (p. 408). If we accept these viewpoints, then the DPP/PCSP model can be viewed as a regulatory node that can effectively cut across sectors.

As will be shown, the DPP/PCSP model is a knowledge-centric node that provides a forum for views and concerns to be expressed, and in turn influence police practice and policy, without regard to particular sectorial (or sectarian) affiliation. Shearing (2001) noted that he believed that the key recommendations of the ICP were ripe for adaptation (p. 260); Meadows (2008) indicated that information flows and paradigms—the mindset at the foundation of a system—both effective places to intervene in a system (p. 194). The model at hand can be conceived to represent an intervention at both the information flow and paradigm level. Taken together, these two points seem to indicate that the DPP/PCSP model represents an intervention that can remedy broad systemic issues within policing that has the potential to be adapted and applied in a variety of contexts.

## **Structure**

The initial conception of the DPP/PCSP model can be found in sections 6.25-6.35 of the Patten Report. Section 6.25 references the Policing Board as “the central institution for democratic accountability”, while also noting “there should be constant dialogue at the local levels between the police and the community”. The section goes on to discuss the Community and Police Liaison Committees, predecessors to the DPP/PCSP model that were less rigidly structured. The Patten Report notes, “only 29% of respondents in our own public attitudes survey were aware of the CPLCs, and nearly 40% of those said they didn’t not know what the CPLC actually did” (6.25). Given the challenges experienced by the CPLC model, the ICP

recommended the creation of the first incarnation of the DPP/PCSP model: the District Policing Partnership Board (DPPB).

While the name was changed when the bodies were codified in the *Policing (Northern Ireland) Act 2000*, the DPPs would largely reflect all of the recommendations made by the Patten Report for the DPPBs. Each DPP would be comprised of 15, 17 or 19 members (ICP, 6.26; *Policing Act*, sch. 3 par. 2 (1).), and would consist of both political (*Policing Act 2000*, sch. 3 par. 3) and independent members (*Policing Act 2000*, sch. 3 par. 4). The number of independent members was always to be one less than the number of the political members (*Policing Act*, sch. 3 par. 2(3)-(5)). The Patten Report also recommended the creation of four sub-groups for Belfast to accommodate for the disproportionate size of its District Council area (6.27), a recommendation that was codified in paragraph 21 of the *Policing Act 2000*.

The DPPs were meant to be broadly representative of the religion, gender, age and cultural background of the areas in which they were implemented (ICP, 6.26). Political members were to be appointed from the district councils in a manner that “reflect[ed] the balance of parities prevailing among the members of the council” (*Policing Act 2000*, sch. 3 par 3(1)), while independent members were nominated by the District Council and appointed by the Policing Board (*Policing Act 2000*, sch. 3 par. 4(1)). The Patten Report envisioned that these independent members “should be selected to represent business and trade union interests and to provide expertise in matters pertaining to community safety” (6.26). Paragraph 8 of schedule 3 of the *Policing Act 2000* also list disqualifying criteria that would prohibit membership on a DPP, which barred those working for the police, Policing Board, or local councils from membership. Paragraph 8 also barred any one who has been imprisoned from being an independent member. The *Policing Act* also stipulates that both the chairman and vice-chairman be appointed by the

council from among the political members, with the chair and vice-chair being members of different political parties where possible, for a term of 12 months (sch. 3 par. 9).

Following a great deal of criticism regarding their effectiveness (Topping, 2015), the DPPs were supplanted by the PCSPs with the passing of the *Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011*. The PCSP model largely reflected the DPPs in regards to structure, maintaining the same number and ratio of political and independent members, with the addition of representatives of designated organizations (*Justice Act 2011*, sch. 1). According to paragraph 7, these designated organizations are determined by the Department of Justice through consultation with each PCSP, and must represent at least four different organizations. As will be explored in the next section, however, these representatives are excluded from the main statutory function of monitoring of the police. The reasons for disqualification remain largely the same for the PCSPs, with slight modification. The most noticeable change is the relaxation of the rule regarding previous imprisonment, with the PCSPs allowing membership for anyone who has been release from imprisonment for at least 5 years (*Justice Act 2011*, sch. 1 par. 9(3)(4)). This is a promising development, as persons who have experienced incarceration are likely to have a very distinct insight into the criminal justice system that may be lacked by those who have not had as direct interaction with it.

Despite these minor changes, the PCSP remains largely the same as the DPP, since the main statutory functions of the DPPs are to be carried out by the Policing Committees of the PCSPs (*Justice Act 2011*, par. 21(2)). The Policing Committees are made up of all the members of the PCSP, excluding the representatives of designated organizations (*Justice Act 2011*, sch. 1 par. 12), resulting in the same members being involved in the main statutory functions. A major departure, however, is the role of the vice-chair. Unlike in the DPPs, the PCSP vice-chairs are

elected by and from among the independent members (*Justice Act 2011*, sch. 1 par. 12(2)(b)). This creates far more balance than the original DPP model, with the leadership no longer dominated by political members.

Recently, major reforms to local government in Northern Ireland have had a significant impact on the PCSPs. As of April 1, the number of council districts in Northern Ireland was reduced from 26 to 11 (*Newtownabbey Times*, Feb. 5 2015). Because the PCSPs are organized on the District Council level, this meant an over 50% reduction in the number of PCSPs. This means that the average share of the population for which each PCSP was responsible for increased from 69,000 to 163,000 (NISRA, 2016). While the change is still too recent to identify significant impacts of the reform, the decrease in number of PCSPs is sure to have an impact on accessibility and awareness, and thus may negatively impact the quality of perspectives and concerns the PCSP is meant to ascertain.

While there have been some obvious changes with each incarnation, these explorations have identified some key facets of the DPP/PCSP model structure. First, the division and balance between political and independent members is intended to create a body that can, in theory, both effectively engage with the community to gain perspectives on policing issues and utilize the information gained to shape policy and procedures in ways that reflect the desires of the community. Second, these political and independent members, as well as the representatives of designated organizations, allow for the representation and influence of various sectors within the PCSP. Operating under the assumptions of Nodal Governance, this multiplicity of interests serves to create a stronger governance node by increasing the number of linkages across sectors. Additionally, from a Systems Thinking perspective, the broad-based representation can allow for more efficient, and holistic, information flow that can in turn increase the effectiveness of the

PCSPs. In the next section, the function of the DPP/PCSP will be discussed, including how the structure impacts its ability to effectively fulfill these functions.

## **Function**

The functions of the PCSPs are laid out statutorily in paragraph 21 of the *Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011*. They largely mirror the previous statutory duties of the DPPs, with two minor changes: the addition of monitoring/evaluation and financial guidelines for local crime reduction plans, and, more significantly, the addition of restricted functions (par. 21(1)(g)-(h); par. 21(2)). Reflecting the structural shift toward the policing committee model, the statute clearly lays out the functions the committee is to perform: providing public views to the District Commander and Policing Board; monitoring police performance; obtaining the cooperation of the public with the police in public safety matters (par. 21(1)(a)-(c)). These functions are further clarified in the *Code of Practice for the Exercise of Functions by PCSPs and DPCSPs* as: consult and engage with local communities; identify and prioritize particular issues of concern; monitor performance against Partnership Plan; deliver a positive difference to communities (p. 6-7). To accomplish this, PCSPs—in partnership with other organizations—deliver programs and services ranging from mural projects to cyber-bullying trainings for teachers (*Inpartnership*, Aug. 2014; Mar. 2015). Though these community programs and initiatives may certainly be beneficial in spreading awareness of the PCSPs, if it is to be thought of as a governance node, then it is the restricted functions which are most important. The committees exercise their functions mainly through informing the development of plans, principally the Local Policing Plans and the overall Northern Ireland Policing Plan.

Annex A of the *PCSP Members Handbook* makes it clear that it is not the role of the PCSP to approve the Local Policing Plan, and indeed that the plan is wholly the responsibility of

the PSNI (n.p.). However, the PCSPs exercise a great deal of influence over the plan, as each District Commander is statutorily obligated to consult with the PCSPs before publishing the plan. The PCSPs, in turn, are required to consult with the public to identify and prioritize issues of importance to the local community. Thus, the PCSPs act as a clearinghouse for issues that can provide a fresh perspective to police officials tasked with creating and implementing policy. In addition to the Local Policing Plans, the overall Annual Policing Plan for all for Northern Ireland is also informed by the PCSPs through their consultation with the Policing Board. By providing the issues of concern to their local community, the PCSPs are meant to provide a more holistic understanding of policing problems throughout Northern Ireland for the Policing Board to then pass along to the PSNI. The PSNI then uses that information in the formulation of goals and objectives for the Annual Policing Plan, which serves as the measure by which the Policing Board holds the PSNI to account. The PCSPs are principally responsible for the creating of the Partnership Plan, which serves as the official compilation of identified and prioritized policing and community safety issues for their locality (*Code of Practice*, 4.2) It should be noted, that these processes remain largely unchanged from the first implementation of the DPPs (*Police Act 2000*). The DPP/PCSP model, then, acts as a node primarily concerned with the collections and organization of knowledge, which can then be utilized by other nodes throughout the system that have more authority and/or capacity. To collect this knowledge, the PCSPs carry out consultations with the public and the PSNI through a number of means.

*Code of Practice* Section 4.5-4.6 lays out the recommended course of action for PCSPs regarding public meetings. It recommends that a minimum of two public meetings a year on particular policing issues. Additionally, they should consider having the focus of at least one public meeting be the performance of the police, during which time members of the public would

have the opportunity to ask questions of the PSNI Commander and the members of the PCSPs. These meetings are the principle responsibility of the Policing Committee, and while the representatives of designated organizations are encouraged to attend, they play no role in asking questions of the police (4.5). It is also recommended that the PCSPs hold a minimum of two public meetings regarding the wider nature of the work of the partnership, which include the members of the designated organizations (4.6). These public meetings sit at the heart of the PCSPs statutory responsibility for consultation/engagement with the community and identification/prioritization of issues of concern. It is interesting, then, that the number and nature of meetings are recommendations, and not statutory obligations. While this certainly would allow greater latitude for PCSPs to develop systems that would be most effective in their own locality, it could also create significant disparities in the quality of service delivered by different PCSPs. In addition, the recommended meetings are not necessarily robust, since they are likely to provide only one opportunity a year for citizens to ask questions of high-ranking police officials.

While public meetings are one of the most obvious conceivable ways of engaging the community and gathering their views and concerns regarding policing, they are not always the most effective. A number of issues impacts the effectiveness of a public meeting, with many of them hinging on socio-economic factors. In an examination of the public meetings another police-community consultative body in Northern Ireland, Partners and Communities Together (PACT), Brunger (2011) found three general conclusions: PACT meetings provided forums for the citizens to bring low level disorder issues to the PSNIs' attention; due to low attendance the meetings were not representative of the local community; PACTs have not made an impact in the way local policing is governed. Though there are some significant differences between the PACT

and DPP/PCSP models, particularly that the PACTs are set up by the PSNI and tend to focus on micro-issues, issues similar to these could conceivably impact the quality of PCSP public meetings. One strength of the DPP/PCSP model as compared to the PACT model is the existence of moderating forces. Since PACT meetings were organized, and in some cases run, by members of the PSNI, the meetings often “[provided] PSNI officers an arena where they can engage in dramaturgical performances, from which *their* message can be conveyed to the assembled audience” (Brunger, 2011 p. 106). Shearing & Wood (2003) also posited that the growing wealth disparity globally is paralleled by a growing governance disparity, with those with less wealth having less access to the emerging systems of governance (p. 419). It is not difficult to imagine how this translates into the real world: to have your concerns and views considered by the PCSP, you must have the ability to attend the public meetings, which may be difficult or impossible for lower-income individuals. To combat these issues, alternative and more creative approaches to consultation are necessary.

Through this analysis, some clearly identifiable functions of the DPP/PCSP model can be broadly identified. First, the DPP/PCSP is a knowledge-centric node, which exercises its authority and capacity through its connections to other nodes. To gather this knowledge, public consultation is carried out to gain a sense of the issues of concern in its particular locality. Second, the DPP/PCSP model exerts its influence through the creation of plans that reflect the issues and concerns gathered through its knowledge collection. These plans are used to inform the goal setting by relevant decision makers within the policing system to help craft overall plans for policing policy and procedure, which in turn influence local plans created by decision makers in the locality.

### **Efficacy**



This section explores the efficacy of the DPP/PCSP model through a secondary analysis of data contained in the *Public Perceptions of the Police, DPPs (PCSPs), and the Northern Ireland Policing Board* reports published the Northern Ireland Policing Board between 2003 and 2015. Where, appropriate, DPP/PCSP specific questions will be compared against two questions regarding police service: (1) do you think the PSNI does a good job or poor job in your area?; and (2) Do you think the PSNI does a good job or poor job in Northern Ireland as a whole? The analysis of these questions will allow us to compare the trends identified in the perceptions of the DPPs/PCSPs with trends regarding perceptions of policing service delivery. To that end, there are several trends within the perceptions of the police that are pertinent to this analysis. First, perceptions of the police in Northern Ireland as a whole tend to be more positive in both communities than perceptions of policing in the respondents localities. Protestant respondents have a more favorable view of police performance than Catholic respondents on both the micro and macro levels; however, the difference is more pronounced at the macro level. Perceptions of policing, both locally and as a whole, are positive, with averages of positive responses on both levels well above 50% in both communities. There also seems to be a positive upward trend, with low-points in perception for both levels in both communities falling between 2003 and 2006, while the high-points have been experienced between 2009 and 2014. Even at the lowest points however, Catholic responses hovered around 50% on the macro level, and Protestant responses dipped below 70% in only 3 of the years covered.

Analysis of these two questions also revealed 2007 as a key turning point. Positive responses on the macro level from Catholic respondents increased by 11% between 2006 and 2007, from 51% to 62%; this is particularly noteworthy because the survey for the 2007 report was conducted between September 24<sup>th</sup> and October 27<sup>th</sup> 2007 (p. 4), the first survey to be

conducted following the acceptance of the St. Andrews Agreement by all political parties in Northern Ireland. One of the most significant aspects of the St. Andrews Agreements was that, for the first time, the largest political party representing the CNR community, Sinn Fein, agreed to recognize the legitimacy of the PSNI and to take their allotted seats on the DPPs and Policing Board (*Agreement at St. Andrews, 2006*). This added boost to the legitimacy of policing, and the structures governing it, within the CNR community is the most likely explanation for the significant and sustained change in perception of policing within that community. Seven years later, positive Catholic responses hit their highest point, with 70% of respondents saying the police did a fairly/very good job in Northern Ireland as a whole in 2014. As the following analysis will show, the St. Andrews Agreement had a huge impact not just on perceptions of the police, but also on perceptions of the DPPs/PCSPs.

#### *Awareness*

Three questions have been categorized into awareness for the purposes of this analysis: (1) Have you heard of the DPPs (PCSPs)? (2003-2015); (2) Do you know who your local PCSPs members are? (2013-2014); and (3) Do you know how to contact them about policing and community safety? (2013-2014). The first question represents the only one asked every year being analyzed for this study. The responses to it, therefore, provide a fairly robust picture of awareness of the DPPs/PCSPs and their role in policing issues. Unsurprisingly, the lowest percentage of respondents indicating 'yes' occurred in the early 2000s, when the DPPs were still fairly new. Awareness of the DPPs/PCSPs has generally been higher among Protestant respondents, though both Catholic and Protestant respondents indicating 'yes' average above 50%. Additionally, there was a general upward trend in awareness in both communities that peaked in 2012. This is of particular note, as 2012 was the last survey to be conducted before the

DPPs were replaced by the PCSPs, and thus the last to ask about DPPs as opposed to PCSPs.

There was a close to 30% drop in awareness of the DPPs among Catholic respondents between 2012 and 2013, while awareness among Protestant respondents dropped 10% in the same time period (and another 8% between 2013 and 2014). In addition, 2012 represents the year in which Catholic (68%) and Protestant (70%) respondents were nearest to parity in terms of awareness.

This seems to indicate that while awareness had been growing, the reformation and rebranding of the DPPs into the PCSPs had a huge negative impact on awareness. Of particular concern is that data from 2013-2015 does not show any sort of significant upward trend in awareness of the PCSPs in either community. This could be an indication that there has not been enough of an effort to educate the public about the new bodies.

The 2013 and 2014 surveys are the only two to specifically ask about knowledge of both local PCSP members and how to contact them. In both years in both communities, more than 80% of respondents indicated that they did not know who their local PCSP members were. While this is certainly not an advertisement for the successful branding of the PCSPs, it may not represent as large an issue as it might seem. Despite the lack of awareness of particular members, in 2013 and 2014 between 75% and 90% of respondents in both communities indicated they did know how to contact the PCSPs regarding issues of policing and community safety. This could indicate that it is not necessarily required that citizens have a high level of awareness of a DPP/PCSP style body to feel they know how to use it, a potentially positive finding as it could indicate that citizens perceive the DPP/PCSP model to be open and accessible.

### *Confidence*

Two questions from the reports were categorized as related to confidence: (1) How much confidence do you have that DPPs help address local policing problems? (2004-2012); (2) Who

would you normally contact on policing and community safety issues? (2013-2014). The first question produces the clearest picture regarding public confidence in the DPPs, and thus particular attention will be given to its analysis; however, while the second question was only asked in two of the years being examined, examination of the responses offers some insight into the most prominent avenues of redress for grievances regarding policing issues in the perception of the public. Responses to the first question were measured on a Likert-scale with choices being: 'total'; 'a lot'; 'some'; 'little'; 'no'; and 'don't know/refusal'. Across all years, 'some' garnered the largest percentage of respondents from both communities, with average rates of 49.5% for Catholic respondents and 49.75% for Protestant. This parity of respondents was not unique, however, as average rates across all responses for both communities were within a few tenths of a percent of each other. This seems to suggest that similar levels of optimism and pessimism for the DPPs abilities existed in both communities. Each year, rates for respondents indicating 'some' confidence was within 2-3% of 50%; taken with respondents indicating 'total' and 'a lot' of confidence, this means that more than half of respondents from both communities had a positive conception of the DPPs ability to address policing problems in their local areas. Behind 'some', the second and third most indicated responses were 'a lot' and 'little'.

Rates for respondents indicating 'a lot' of confidence in the DPPs were consistently higher than rates for 'little' from Protestants in every year between 2004 and 2015, and from Catholics in every year from 2006 to 2015. Average response rates for 'a lot' from both communities were around 19%, while the average rate for 'little' was around 15%. Both communities had their peak response rate for 'a lot' in 2007, with just under a quarter of respondents, a potential reflection of the impact of the St. Andrews Agreement. 2007 also represented the first time more than 20% of Catholic respondents indicated 'a lot' of confidence,

with the rate remaining at or above 20% in every year since. Additionally, there appears to be a strong positive correlation between Catholic respondents who indicate ‘a lot’ of confidence and positive perceptions of police performance on both the micro ( $r=.77$ ) and macro ( $r=.83$ ) level. Though it’s difficult to draw strong conclusions from this correlation, it could indicate a relationship between perceptions of DPP ability to address and perceptions of police performance.

The second question in this category appeared on only two surveys, and dealt more generally with how respondents would seek to remedy issues of policing and community safety. In both 2013 and 2014, the vast majority of both Catholic and Protestant respondents indicated they would contact the police regarding local issues. The PCSPs were among the least popular responses, scoring consistently lower than every other response in both communities except for ‘neighborhood watch’ and ‘other’. Perhaps most troubling, around 15% of respondents in both communities indicated they ‘would not normally contact anyone’ regarding local issues. This could indicate a fairly significant level of apathy among citizens regarding their ability to effect positive change to policing policy and procedure. While this is certainly an issue that should be explored further, some responses to this question could be interpreted as a positive sign for the DPP/PCSP model. Around 20% of respondents in both communities indicated that they would likely contact their local Councilor regarding these issues, representing the second largest share of respondents behind the police. A perception of councilors as effective avenues for the redress of policing issues could indicate that the strong links to local government could be one of the greatest assets of the DPP/PCSP model.

### *Engagement*

One question from the reports was categorized as engagement for this project: (1) Are you prepared to contact your local DPP to raise issues/ask questions about local policing? (2003-2012). Respondents from both communities seemed to show a tacit willingness to engage with the DPPs, with responses of ‘yes’ outweighing ‘no’ in every year among Protestants, and every year except 2004 and 2005 among Catholics. Despite this, the ‘yes’ rates among both communities were not resounding, with an average rate of 51% among Catholic respondents and 58% among Protestants. This seems to indicate a slightly high level of engagement with the DPPs from the Protestant community, with ‘yes’ rates rising to at or above 60% in the last two years of the survey. Unsurprisingly, the peak ‘yes’ rate for Catholic respondents occurred in 2007, the only year Catholic rates were at parity with Protestant rates, with 58% of responses. The ‘yes’ rate among Protestant respondents remained relatively stable in the period from 2004 to 2008, while the Catholic rate rose 14% between 2005 and 2007, only to drop 7% in 2008. This could indicate that, while Sinn Fein’s official acceptance of the legitimacy of the PSNI and policing structures in Northern Ireland was a boon initially for the DPPs, its impact on the communities long-term willingness to engage was more limited. This would mean increased legitimacy can act as a trigger to increase citizen engagement with the DPP/PCSP model, but it alone is not sufficient to sustain it. Another interpretation is that optimism stemming from the St. Andrews Agreement was fleeting within the Catholic community, and eventually sentiments returned to a baseline cynicism regarding policing. It should be noted, however, that all ‘yes’ response rates among Catholics post-2007 remained at least 5% higher than their lowest point in 2004 and 2005, which could mean the increased legitimacy did have some impact in the long term on citizens willingness to engage.

### *Perception*

One question was categorized as related to perceptions of the DPPs/PCSPs: (1) Do you feel that your local DPP (PCSP) has helped to improve policing in your local areas? (2004-2015). In general, the responses were not overwhelmingly positive. Average positive response rates for both Protestants and Catholics represented only about a third of respondents, while negative responses averaged around 40% for both communities. In fact, there was no year in which 'yes' response rates surpassed 'no' rates among Protestant respondents. This indicates that, despite the slightly higher likelihood to engage with the DPPs, the Protestants had a generally pessimistic view of the effectiveness of the bodies in accomplishing their main goal. By contrast, 'yes' rates among Catholic respondents began consistently equaling or outpacing 'no' rates beginning in 2010. So, despite a lesser likelihood of engagement with them, there seems to be a more positive conception of DPP/PCSP effectiveness within the Catholic community. It should also be noted that this question had the highest rates of 'don't know/refusal' of any question with that answer, representing as many as a quarter to a third of respondents in some years. This could indicate that, even among those who had heard of the DPPs/PCSPs, there was still a lack of awareness regarding their impact.

As with most of the other questions, the largest increase in positive responses can be found between 2006 and 2007, particularly among Catholic respondents. 'Yes' rates rose by almost 10% among Catholic respondents, and 5% among Protestants, indicating again that the St. Andrews Agreement likely had a stronger impact on Catholic perceptions than Protestant. Catholic responses of 'yes' did peak in 2014, at 45%, however that trend was reversed in 2015 when the rate dropped by 13%, its lowest rate since 2009. Though the rate tends to fluctuate significantly year-to-year, there is a general upward trend, with rates remaining at least 3-6% above their lowest levels in 2003-2006. Regardless, this analysis clearly reveals issues with the

DPP/PCSP model that must be addressed. Because the model is predicated on increasing confidence through public consultation, citizen perceptions that it has improved policing are key to its success; the high rates of negative responses, coupled with the relatively high rates of ‘don’t know/refusal’, points to a serious issue with legitimacy. Analysis from this section clearly indicates that there is much work to be done in both communities to communicate the mission and work of the PCSPs to citizens, while also gaining their perspectives on what makes for both effective consultation, and more importantly effective policing policies and practices.

### *Summary*

This analysis, while not providing any concrete conclusions, did highlight several trends that are useful to understanding the DPP/PCSP model. First, the biggest impact on awareness of the DPPs was time, shown by the significant drop-off following the implementation of the PCSPs. If the trend follows as it did for the DPPs, awareness of the PCSPs may not reach rates similar to those found in 2012 until 2023. This indicates that a more substantial effort may need to be made to raise awareness of the PCSPs if this rate is to be increased. Second, the St. Andrews Agreement seemed to have the biggest impact on responses to all of the questions. The noticeable increases in 2007, particularly in positive perceptions of the police, indicate that legitimacy in the form of representation is necessary for the DPP/PCSP model to be effective. Third, there was a generally positive outlook from both communities regarding the DPPs, with some reservations about its abilities. However, these reservations are compounded by the fact that perceptions that the DPPs and PCSPs had improved policing remained consistently low in both communities, indicating a fairly substantial level of lack of awareness at best and cynicism at worst. Finally, although there was a noted increase in awareness and confidence during the same time, there was no significant increase among respondents in either community regarding



their willingness to contact the DPP between 2008 and 2012. The peak rate for Catholic respondents in 2007 indicates that a lack of legitimacy, stemming from the absence of Sinn Fein representatives on the DPPs, was the largest barrier to Catholic willingness to engage with the DPPs. These findings seem to indicate that legitimacy is among the most important factors for positive perceptions of DPP/PCSP model effectiveness. The next section will focus on critical questions raised by this analysis, coupled with the analysis of the structure and function of the model, with question connected by the common thread of legitimacy.

### **Critical Questions**

From the above analysis of the structure, function, and efficacy of Northern Ireland's DPP/PCSP model, three conceptually distinct, but functionally inseparable, threads emerge for understanding how the model could be effectively adapted: (1) buy-in/engagement; (2) enforcement/influence; and (3) composition. These three threads are linked by virtue of their impact on legitimacy, which in turn has a significant impact on effectiveness. To explore these three threads, three different critical questions will be examined. These critical questions are meant to be generative of further thinking on both the impact of any one particular thread, as well as the interactions between the threads and their relationship with overarching concept of legitimacy. This further thinking will present a potential first step toward adapting the DPP/PCSP model for use in the United States.

*How will stakeholder buy-in be ensured, and how will engagement be sustained?*

One of the most prominent findings in the analysis of efficacy was a dearth of willingness to engage with the DPPs. This is particularly worrisome, as the DPP/PCSP model is meant to be a knowledge-centric node, making its effectiveness reliant on broad-based and representative consultation with the community. Additionally, the DPPs/PCSPs have struggled to gain broad

awareness in the community. While awareness and engagement with the community as a whole is of utmost importance, the issue is sure to be greater with regards to traditionally disenfranchised groups. Of particular concern when discussing policing matters is the relationship between young people and the criminal justice system. A survey of PSNI officers in North Belfast found that two-thirds of respondents were “more or much more likely to use diversionary powers”, such as giving an official warning, to young people than adults, and all respondents had experienced “incivility” from young people (NIPB & NISRA, 2013 p. 3). This highlights the often-difficult relationship that exists between young people and the police. Given this difficult relationship, particular care should be taken to ensure a DPP/PCSP model body is accessible to and utilized by young people.

Of particular concern with regards to engagement is also the role of class in access to DPP/PCSP model structures. Shearing & Wood (2003) highlighted a growing governance disparity that is mirroring the growing wealth disparity, which is particularly troubling when one takes into account that, according to one study by the Northern Ireland Policing Board, those from lower socioeconomic groups were more likely than others to rate the job of the police poorly (NIPB, Feb 2014). This means that any body based off the DPP/PCSP model must take particular care to ensure engagement across the income spectrum. To do this, there must be an expansion of the models consultation infrastructure. To ensure the broad engagement and accessibility, then, more creative avenues of consultation must be explored. The integration of social media into a DPP/PCSP model’s function could greatly increase its engagement with young people, and more numerous forms of in-person consultations at varying times could improve engagement with lower income individuals.

Buy-in and engagement from the police is also of central importance, and requires a delicate balance. Too little involvement from the police could jeopardize the bodies enforcement and influence mechanisms, while too much involvement stands to turn public meetings into public relations events for the police, as Brunger (2011) found with the PACT meetings. Therefore, it seems that the DPPs/PCSPs find an ideal balance by holding public meetings with high-ranking officers, thus providing the community with the opportunity for face-time with the ‘top brass’, while still maintaining its independence of the police. This also allows DPP/PCSP members to act as advocates for policing issues, by gaining the perspective of the community and ensuring the relevant decision-makers hear and understand this perspective.

The changes in Catholic responses on surveys from 2007 forward, which can likely be linked to the St. Andrews Agreement, highlight the importance of buy-in from all relevant stakeholders. Though it was a political agreement among politicians that granted the increased legitimacy in the Northern Irish context, engagement and buy-in is likely to look much different in the United States. A body set up under the DPP/PCSP model in the US context would need to engage with the largely decentralized network of activists who are engaged in the movements for police accountability, which sits at the nexus of many other movements involving racial justice and civil rights. Influencers and thought leaders within these networks would need to be engaged, in addition to securing buy-in from people in more ‘official’ leadership roles.

In the context of the United States, the issues of buy-in and engagement beget a number of other questions. On what level would the body be set up? How would it be set up? How would members be selected? What will its relationship with the police be? All of these questions, as well as hundreds more, would have to be answered, but there is one question that would likely be among the first asked by citizens and policy makers alike: what will it do?

*What will the methods of influence and enforcement be?*

To be truly effective, a police oversight mechanism must have some form of influence or enforcement that allows it to effect police policy, practice, and behavior. In the DPP/PCSP model, this influence is exercised through two main functions: (1) the issuing of reports and (2) consultation with local police commanders. The first function is particularly important, as the nodal conception of governance developed in Northern Ireland has relied on the issuing of reports to set goals and measure benchmarks. The DPP/PCSP model's role in these reports is mainly an informative one: identifying issues of concern to the community and setting priorities. These priorities are meant to help the police in developing strategies that are more responsive to the communities concerns, while also enabling the other governance nodes to monitor police performance against these priorities. The priorities feed into goals on both the local and national level, and other nodes hold the police accountable to these goals through budgetary and financial means. The DPPs/PCSPs also have the opportunity to hold the police accountable to these goals through their second function. By obligating the local police commander to answer questions regarding police performance in the area, the DPP/PCSP model opens avenues of accountability up to citizens. Though the local commander must answer these questions, the DPP/PCSP model lacks any mechanism to enact changes to the police on its own. Therefore, any body set up under the DPP/PCSP model would require substantial linkages to other governance nodes with greater authority.

In the context of the United States, the DPP/PCSP model would need to be linked with agencies above the local level to be truly effective. One possibility is utilizing state-level criminal justice agencies, which often have some degree to budgetary oversight of local police forces, to fulfill the role of the Policing Board. If the DPP/PCSP model were set up state wide,

then the bodies would represent substantial linkages between local decision makers, local knowledge bases, and state-level capacities. Adaptation is likely to change some of the structural components, but much of the function must remain the same, or be strengthened, for the DPP/PCSP model to be effective. It would be unwise to attempt to add additional oversight functions, such as punitive or transactional powers, as it would muddle the main focus of the model. At its most basic level, the model requires significant consultative opportunities with both the community and the police. It also requires the body to act as a conduit to ensure that this information is shared effectively and efficiently with all relevant nodes, allowing more authoritative nodes to take actions to directly influence and impact police policy and practice. This level of distance helps to avoid a ‘majority-rules’ situation in which the police act only at the whim of the community, or more likely a very vocal minority within the community.

It is obvious that the DPP/PCSP model relies on substantial connections to both the community and government agencies to be effective. This, then, requires thinking about how these connections can be forged and sustained. One of the best ways to secure these connections is through broad-based membership, which would allow more stakeholder groups to feel some sense of ownership of the model. But practical concerns must also be taken into account, which then begs the question: who will be involved?

*Who will the membership be composed of?*

As has been noted, both buy-in and influence are key to the legitimacy of the DPP/PCSP model. Buy-in and influence are both greatly impacted by who is involved in the model, and in what capacity. The DPPs and PCSPs represented bridges linking the local community, local government, the police, and national government. The local level linkages were mainly ensured through the composition of the bodies. The split between independent and political members

allowed for balance that can help de-politicize the already contentious topic of policing. Independent members provided the optics of active citizen engagement, while political members gave the impression of validity, together legitimizing the influencing mechanisms. This balance is key for the model, and thus any adaptation should maintain the presence of mixed membership. This then opens up the question of how independent members would be selected, which could be answered through the linkages to higher level agencies noted in the previous section. Taken together, it's clear the legitimacy of enforcement requires legitimacy of membership, which is in turn impacted by the relative balance between stakeholders and interest.

Membership is also particularly important when thinking about buy-in and engagement. For the model to be effective it must consult with as much of the community as possible, and so steps must be taken to ensure the body is as representative as possible. If citizens are of the belief that the body doesn't represent their interests, or won't be responsive to their needs and concerns, then they are unlikely to engage with it on a broad scale, as was seen with Catholics in Northern Ireland prior to the St. Andrews Agreement. Given the constraints of consociational political arrangements (McGratten, 2013), much of the CNR community was not represented in regards to policing issues until Sinn Fein agreed to take their seats on the Policing Board and DPPs. Ensuring broad-based, representative membership of the body ensures that a plurality of opinions will be represented, and thus differing points of view are likely to be taken into consideration more holistically. Greater representation will lead to greater buy-in and engagement, which will lead to greater influence and thus increased legitimacy.

Taken all together, membership represents the strongest point through which both buy-in and influence can be strengthened. However, this does not mean the structure of the DPP/PCSP model must be followed exactly. Experimentation with both the ratios and roles of the political

and independent members has the potential to create a body that is more responsive to and representative of the community in which it is being implemented. This then leads to one final question: how should the model be designed to maximize legitimacy through representative composition, appropriate influence, and broad-based buy-in?

## **Conclusion**

Though each is shaped by its own particular histories and cultural contexts, The United States and Northern Ireland share many similar root causes of police-community relation's issues. Given their similar histories of militarized, oppressive and occupational policing, Northern Ireland can in some way be viewed—albeit very critically by necessity—as a starting point for the development of strategies, systems, and structures to mend police-community relations in the United States. The systemic nature of the problems that exist between the police and certain communities throughout the United States demands a systems-oriented solution; Northern Ireland's DPP/PCSP model, through its focus on creating linkages across sectorial networks to allow for comprehensive consultation, can serve as a guide to developing and implementing an effective systems solution to this pressing systemic problem.

This case study of the DPP/PCSP model revealed some key features of its structure and function, as well as key questions for adaptation stemming from its efficacy. The DPP/PCSP model is predicated on broad-based and widespread consultation with the community to gain an understanding of the views and concerns of citizens with regard to policing. To accomplish this, the model must include a mixed membership of political and independent members, who lend to the legitimacy by increasing buy-in and validating influencing mechanisms. Independent members facilitate the active consultation of the community beyond political imperatives to ensure more holistic knowledge is gathered, while political members provide the view of the

model as official, and represent—rightly or not—an avenue for that knowledge to be passed to relevant decision-makers. This operation as a knowledge-centric node in a networked system of governance allows an avenue for the public to influence to policies and procedures of the police through the setting of priorities. These priorities are then used to set goals and benchmarks that are measured at various stages by other nodes in the network, as well as by the DPP/PCSP node in a less directly authoritative fashion.

A review of public perception data revealed a number of important trends and questions about if and how the model can be effectively adapted. First, there seemed to be a general lack of awareness of their existence. Second, there was only moderate confidence that they could address policing problems, and a negative perception regarding their effectiveness in improving policing. These two issues could potentially be linked to awareness, in that their role and responsibilities may not have been clearly communicated to the public at large. Finally, and most significantly, the efficacy of the model seems to be tied very closely to legitimacy. In order for the model to effectively increase confidence in the police through consultation, it must first have effective consultation. If the model does not include buy-in and active participation from all relevant stakeholders, particularly different groups within the community, than its effectiveness will be stunted. The noticeable increases in awareness and confidence, and the moderate increases in engagement and perception, following the St. Andrews Agreement seems to indicate that the model is most able to consult effectively with the community when particular identity groups feel that the body is in some way representative of their interests. This analysis led to three critical questions regarding how you secure stakeholder buy-in, ensure effective influencing abilities, and devise a composition of members that can actively promote this buy-in



and influence to solidify legitimacy. Altogether, these three critical threads serve as the most natural, and most necessary, starting point for adapting the DPP/PCSP model.

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