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ARTICLE

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#Defund or #Re-Fund? Re-examining Bayley's blueprint for police reform

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ABSTRACT

In light of the defund the police movement, it is imperative we consider what police reform could and potentially should look like. Some, for example, have called for a reduced police footprint in marginalised communities through reallocating police funding towards preventative services for a myriad of social issues. However, drawing on David Bayley's *Police for the Future*, we show that a dilemma arises with respect to police involvement in these issues: the police cannot be solely relied upon to address all social issues, but they cannot be fully absolved of the responsibility either. As such, further drawing on Bayley's thoughts for police reform, we instead argue for the adoption of evidence-based policing as a more fruitful driver of meaningful, long-term police reform as it not only enables the police to identify practices that are effective or even harmful, but it also can be used as means for police accountability.

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Introduction

In light of global calls for systemic change in policing – most notably in the form of the defund the police movement arising from the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota – it is imperative we consider what police reform could and potentially should look like. Certainly, perspectives on this issue are polarised. Some activists and scholars have called for outright abolition of the police (Vitale, 2017; McDowell & Fernandez, 2018; Arrieta-Kenna, 2020; Illing, 2020). Others have settled on a more reform-oriented approach that would reduce the footprint of policing in marginalised communities through either reallocating police funding to more "upstream" social work or public health preventative approaches or integrating police more fully within public health models (Collier, 2017; Boynton, 2020; Mukherjee, 2020). Still another cluster of both academics and police practitioners believe the key to sustainable policing reform lies in increasing police creation and use of high-quality research to inform evidence-based policies and practices (Sherman, 1998). This latter group of reformers see research as providing solutions to how best address the policing end of many complex social issues beyond simply increasing police effectiveness and efficiency.

As many concede – including voices from within the defund the police movement – outright abolition is not a viable public policy position likely to win electorates. For this reason, in this paper we focus instead on the two reform-oriented positions outlined above in light of two key considerations: (1) what do we want the police to do?; and, (2) how do we want them to do it? To explore these questions, we situate our analysis within the work of David Bayley. In particular, we focus on the "Solutions" Bayley (1994) presents in *Police for the Future*, a stunningly prescient

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critique of much of the reform talk currently in vogue. Arguing that we can learn much from Bayley, we unpack current reform discourses and their relative viability in creating policing reform. We also show how Bayley's "Blueprint for the Future" lays the groundwork for an evidence-based policing approach, which, in line with his own prescriptions for police reform, we contend has the best chances for generating meaningful long-term change within public policing.

Defund the police

In the United States, the American public – and particularly communities of colour – have long endured a tremulous relationship with the police. Recently, these tensions reached a boiling point following the death of Mr. George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota. On 25 May 2020, Floyd was accused of purchasing a pack of cigarettes with counterfeit currency by a convenience store clerk (Hill et al., 2020). The clerk confronted Floyd and then called 911, accusing Floyd of being intoxicated and not "in control of himself." The Minneapolis Police Department responded and placed Floyd under arrest. Upon transferring Mr. Floyd into the police vehicle, a struggle ensued (Hill et al., 2020). Mr. Floyd was removed from the back of the police vehicle and restrained facedown down on the street by three officers, one of whom pressed his knee into the back of Floyd's neck – a form of neck compression that has been banned and/or denounced by police leaders in numerous jurisdictions (Nasser, 2020; Andrew, 2020a). Despite Mr. Floyd communicating that he was unable to breath, the officer held his knee on Floyd's neck for approximately nine minutes (Donaghue, 2020; Hill et al., 2020). For three of those minutes, Mr. Floyd was unconscious (Donaghue, 2020). Shortly afterwards, he was transported to hospital by ambulance where he was later pronounced dead.[1]

All four officers at the scene were fired from the Minneapolis Police Department the following day and criminally charged (Hill et al., 2020). News of Floyd's death quickly spread around the country, and indeed the world. Many police leaders in the United States and elsewhere publicly denounced Floyd's death (Helsel, 2020; Leon, 2020). In Canada, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (2020a) issued a statement acknowledging racism in Canada and decrying systemic racism. Similarly, the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (2020) acknowledged the presence of systemic racism within policing and emphasised a need to eradicate it. Such responses did little to stem protests, which emerged in many cities in Canada, the United States and across the globe. The general demand among protestors was a call for police reform aimed at reducing or eliminating the footprint of policing in marginalised communities. The framing of this demand was simple: defund the police. What "defunding" *precisely* entails, however, appears to differ depending on whom you ask (Boynton, 2020). For some, defunding of the police refers to complete abolition of the policing institution (Vitale, 2017; McDowell & Fernandez, 2018; Arrieta-Kenna, 2020; Illing, 2020). More specifically, this abolitionist camp of the defund movement believes that the police are rooted within white supremacist/colonialist ideals and thus the institution is beyond reform and must be replaced by other forms of public safety (Illing, 2020).

Others within the defund movement focus less on abolishment than on substantial reform. For instance, some argue that police departments – especially those with a documented history of chronic issues – should be disbanded and re-established. This model of reform is driven by recent events in Camden, New Jersey, where, in 2012, the Camden Police Department was disbanded due to rampant corruption (Andrew, 2020b). Shortly afterwards, in 2013, the Camden Police Department was re-established with a larger jurisdictional mandate as the Camden County Police Department and witnessed dramatic decreases in crime (Nix & Wolfe, 2020; Andrew, 2020b). The belief among those advocating for this form of "defunding" is that Camden serves as a model that can be replicated elsewhere.

Yet another perspective to emerge argues for significant divesting of policing and policing initiatives and a reallocation of public funds towards "upstream" social work or public health approaches (Collier, 2017; Boynton, 2020; Mukherjee, 2020; Andrew, 2020c). Reformers who have

adopted this position contend that by heavily investing in a wide array of preventative services, such as programmes for substance use disorder, community-based violence interruption, and affordable housing, would prevent the need for the police to respond to issues related to these, and other social issues further down the line (Boynton, 2020; Mukherjee, 2020; Andrew, 2020c). In other words, the police would be relieved of the responsibility for responding to a wide array of social issues, thus leaving them with the duties that are seen as central to the policing institution: law enforcement and peacekeeping.

One aspect of this debate that has not generated significant attention, and is clearly worth noting, is the fact that police – certainly in the Canadian context – have themselves long called for systemic changes that would either remove the police from these situations or drastically reduce their footprint. With respect to mental health calls, for example, the police have long argued that the mental health of the community should not be a police responsibility, particularly as they lack the skills and training that are found in other, more relevant professions (e.g., Wilson-Bates, 2008; Thompson, 2010). On another front, and in light of the on-going opioid crisis, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (2020b) recently put out a statement calling on the Canadian government to decriminalise the personal use of illicit substances. The Chiefs' position is that substance use disorder should be treated as public health and not a criminal issue. As such, they call for the decreased involvement of the police and the criminal justice system by removing the threat of criminal sanctions, and replacing punishment with an emphasis on harm reduction and treatment (Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, 2020b).

It is also important to note that perspectives on the defund the police movement are certainly not as unambiguous as presented here. Some hold different operationalisations of what "defunding" should entail, whereas others may ascribe to a mixed bag of ideas found within the perspectives discussed above. What is undoubtedly clear, however, is that both the public and numerous of our criminological colleagues agree police reform is indeed required and long overdue (Nix & Wolfe, 2020; Nagin et al., 2020; Stoughton et al., 2020). It is thus imperative that we further interrogate the idea of police reform in order to examine the viability of certain reform policies that have already been put forth, as well as to further understand what police reform could and, ideally, should look like.

Bayley on police reform: What do we want police to do?

Prior to the 1990s, public policing was experiencing a rather different crisis. At this time, police practice in many jurisdictions – such as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, and New Zealand – was largely informed by what is often referred to as the "standard model" of policing (Sherman, 2013). This approach was a "one-size-fits-all", reactive form of policing that placed a heavy emphasis on practices such as random patrols, rapid responses to calls for service, reactive investigations, and intensive enforcement (Skogan & Frydl, 2004; Weisburd & Eck, 2004; Sherman, 2013). Widespread increases in crime rates throughout the 1970s and 1980s, however, led some – including David Bayley (1994) in one of his seminal works, *Police for the Future* – to question the ability of the police to reduce and prevent crime. In light of this, Bayley discussed five possible *Options for Policing* that outlined their role in the prevention of crime, some of which are strikingly relevant to today's broader debates around defunding of the police.

First, Bayley (1994, p. 124) suggests police can engage in *determined crime prevention* – "demonstrably effective action to reduce crime". Drawing on the work of Herman Goldstein (1990) and others, Bayley argues that police services engaged in determined crime prevention need to: (1) assess trends and needs as they relate to crime and disorder; (2) diagnose causes for crime and disorder; (3) develop strategies to address identified problems; (4) mobilise the community; (5) innovate new approaches to crime prevention; (6) coordinate public and private crime prevention efforts; and (7) evaluate strategies to ensure they are achieving their intended objectives. While there is much to find appealing in this approach, Bayley (p. 126) noted the possibility of public concern

over determined crime prevention, as successful efforts would require "the police to collect information about all aspects of community life, not simply about circumstances surrounding specific crimes."

Alternatively, Bayley (1994) suggests that the police could engage in *efficient law enforcement*. This approach "has the police give up, reduce, or civilianize activities that do not contribute to preventing crime" (Bayley, 1994, p. 131). That said, Bayley (1994) did not see this a feasible option because, among other reasons, the police would lose valuable intelligence about people, circumstances, and conditions from non-crime prevention-related activities. Instead, he suggests that efficiencies can be identified elsewhere in order to allow the police to have more time for crime prevention efforts, such as ending the practice of random motorised patrol.

A third option is *stratified crime prevention*. This approach largely draws on community-oriented policing in that it "involves concentrating responsibility for crime prevention [. . .] on a particular stratum of police officers, namely, uniformed frontline personnel" (Bayley, 1994, p. 138; Goldstein, 1987; Skogan, 2019). Under this approach, frontline officers would forge strong ties with their local community, identify problems related to crime and disorder, and develop strategies to address said problems. Relative to other options, Bayley (1994, p. 142) believes that "Genuine crime prevention is more likely to take place today as stratified crime prevention than in any other way."

Indeed, today's crisis of whether the police should be involved in addressing or responding to social issues is a significantly more complex and multifaceted issue than crime prevention alone. Even if we were to re-conceptualise determined crime prevention, efficient law enforcement, and stratified crime prevention as possible options for the police as it related to their role in social issues, it would likely not lead to meaningful reform that both criminologists and the public seek. Why? Because these options are either far too narrow in scope to satisfy the broad range of demands made by police reformers or, worse yet, they call for the police to increase their involvement in social issues. Bayley does, however, present two further options that are not only relevant in today's climate, but also highlight the dilemma we are currently enduring with respect to the role of the police in social issues: *dishonest law enforcement* and *honest law enforcement*.

With respect to dishonest law enforcement, Bayley (p. 124) argues that because of the inability of the police to prevent crime, the pretence of police being "an adequate solution to the problem of crime" was dishonest. In other words, the public, policymakers, and even the police themselves understood that the police were the best and only solution to criminal activity, even though this was not the case given the rising crime rates at the time. Arguably, in today's climate, dishonest law enforcement is also the predominate mode of policing in many countries, wherein police are directly tasked with responding to social issues under the guise of crime fighting. This occurs when politicians and other policymakers situate the police as the "solution" to mental health, substance use disorder, or homelessness through demands for public order "crackdowns", quality of life by-law enforcement, and/or various forms of targeted initiatives that disproportionately affect marginalised communities (e.g., Comack et al., 2015; Fagan & Davies, 2000; White & Fradella, 2016), while studiously ignoring or underfunding social, health and other equally or more costly avenues to responding to the underlying factors that contribute to disorder and crime. The failed War on Drugs is perhaps one of the foremost examples of this within recent decades. Through this policy, drugs and substance use disorder were sought to be explicitly eradicated through the threat of criminal punishment, thus making these issues – and substance use disorder in particular – largely a police responsibility (Benson et al., 1995; Lynch, 2012). By consequence, many – particularly those within communities of colour – had chronic involvement with the police and criminal justice system and/or served multi-decade sentences for low-level narcotics possession and/or treatable substance use (Baum, 1997; Cooper, 2015).

Alternatively, the police may also be situated as the solution to certain social issues indirectly, such as when it comes to the responsibility of addressing mental illness in the community. Deinstitutionalisation – a massive social re-engineering project aimed at reintegrating individuals living with mental illness back into society – is a classic example. Deinstitutionalisation was

supposed to entail three central components: the release of institutionalised individuals living with mental illness, diversion to alternative non-institutionalised facilities, and the development of community-based services and programmes (Lamb & Bachrach, 2001). Unfortunately, government failures in developing the latter two components left many living in the community with untreated mental illness and/or lack of access to mental health care, ultimately leaving the police responsible for addressing and responding to mental health issues in the community (Wilson-Bates, 2008; Cotton & Coleman, 2010; Thompson, 2010). Although most calls for police service involving persons with mental illness end informally and without incident (Brink et al., 2011; Charette et al., 2011; Watson & Wood, 2017), the reliance on the police in these situations has contributed to the criminalisation of mental illness and other consequences (Teplin & Pruett, 1992; Iacobucci, 2014; Boyce et al., 2015). This phenomenon is especially problematic in jurisdictions where the criminal justice system is understood as being the only source of mental health care (Lamb & Weinberger, 1998).

To be clear: the police are not intrinsically understood as the "solution" to mental health and other social issues. Rather, it is the sweeping nature of the police mandate – which typically includes crime prevention, preserving the peace, crime response, victim assistance – that leaves them vulnerable to becoming the "catch all" for all manner of social ills (Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, 2014). By way of contrast, fire and ambulance may respond to a myriad of calls for service to assist, but their mandate is clearer: responding to fires and medical emergencies. The fluid nature of a concept such as "preserving the peace" means the police, on the other hand, are expected to respond to everything else. Simply put, politicians, policymakers, and the public have grown to expect the police be the "jack of all trades," but surely are the "master of none." The inability or unwillingness of law enforcement leaders to acknowledge system limits or to push back on public demands for service that reasonably exceed their mandate, has led not only to "mission creep", but to the ever-escalating police budgets that defund reformers decry (Griffiths, 2014; Ruddell & Jones, 2014; Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, 2014).

Honest law enforcement, on the other hand, can be seen as an antidote to the problem of mission creep. Bayley (1994) argues that an honest law enforcement approach would require police leaders to set narrower and stricter boundaries on the types of service calls that would initiate a police response. This would entail, he suggests, a focus on "authoritative intervention and symbolic justice, thereby explicitly making the prevention of crime someone else's responsibility" (Bayley, 1994, p. 144). In today's climate, this position is similar to what some in the defund the police movement argue for: have the police focus on crime prevention and peacekeeping, agree that they should not hold the responsibility for addressing the myriad of social problems that they have been tasked with over the preceding decades, and thus transfer this responsibility to other social actors (Boynton, 2020). This transfer of responsibility would also involve significant divestment from the police in order to fund upstream, preventative services and programmes that are seen as being better suited for addressing social issues as well as factors that contribute to crime (Andrew, 2020c).

Certainly, mental health services and drug treatment programmes already exist, as do other upstream, preventative interventions for a wide array of other social issues. However, as alluded to above, these efforts often suffer policy-related shortfalls, thus tasking the police with the responsibility of responding to these issues in the community once individuals have fallen through the cracks. Those in the defund movement see large and growing police budgets as a possible source for funding these programmes and services (Boynton, 2020; Ho, 2020). There are, however, significant and important caveats to consider here.

First, some within the defund movement are calling for *immediate* and *significant* divestment from the police which would see existing police budgets slashed by upwards of 50% overnight (Boynton, 2020; Andrew, 2020c). Hastily defunding the police, we believe – and as some have already argued – can lead to detrimental consequences (Nix & Wolfe, 2020). For instance, as the bulk of police budgets – certainly within Canada – are comprised of wages (Conor et al., 2019), police services would need to immediately lay off a significant proportion of their officers and

civilian staff, which in turn would only exacerbate on-going issues that the police face with lengthy call queues (London Police Association, 2020). Response times for the police would witness a drastic increase, and with certain call types being given a higher priority over others, one would reasonably expect to see police respond to calls days later, if at all. Further, on-going police efforts to curb violent crime in high crime areas would likely need to cease in order to respond to calls that are accumulating in the queue. Consequently, a lack of police in these communities – in addition to unprecedented levels of understaffing – would likely contribute to increases in violent crime (Mello, 2019; Nix & Wolfe, 2020). Such increases, we observe, have tended to disproportionately impact marginalised and disadvantaged communities (Krivo et al., 2009; Peterson & Krivo, 2010; Papachristos et al., 2018).

Second, and as alluded to earlier, some of the existing programmes and services that are being put forth for increased investment may endure challenges as a result of inefficiencies elsewhere in the system, thus limiting their purported effectiveness. For instance, current income assistance programmes often provide only very limited funds to individuals, commonly out of an unsubstantiated fear that they will dispose of the money for purchases that may not necessarily be in their best interest or that government assistance will disincentivize individuals to seek employment (Banerjee et al., 2017; Zhao et al., 2020). These limited funds, especially for those experiencing homelessness, may force one to choose between necessities, such as paying for rent or groceries, thus only exacerbating the revolving door of insecurities for these and other necessities, and by consequence, requiring the continued use of social services and other programmes[2] (Kenny, 2015). In other words, even if these programmes and services were to experience increased funding as a result of divesting in the police, limitations in other sectors of the system may prevent some individuals from breaking the cycle of continued reliance on these services, and as a result, may not actually reduce their likelihood of coming into contact with police as is intended by those in the defund the police movement. Further, the underlying assumption of such efforts remains untested – that is, that these services would work effectively to reduce social harms if only they were better funded. To the extent that many individuals who come to police attention are already receiving social, addiction, housing and/or health and mental health services would suggest that the matter of affecting change through upstream prevention and rehabilitation is a bit more complicated than shifting line items on municipal budgets.

Third, even though greater investment in upstream, preventative services would theoretically relieve the police from the responsibility to respond to an array of social problems, it would not completely absolve them of the responsibility. Mental health diagnoses, for example, are a significant predictor for select missing persons cases (Ferguson & Huey, 2020). Given that missing persons are a police responsibility, the police would likely be placed in a position to come into contact with these individuals when found, and it would not be implausible to assume that a small proportion of these contacts may even occur within the context of a mental health crisis. The same yields true for other types of police-related issues. Mental illness, substance use disorder, and other social issues may be present at the scene of various calls where the police were originally called for other reasons, such as the commission of a crime, being witnesses to a crime, or even victims of a crime (see for example, Livingston et al., 2014). Further, even if we had upstream, preventative programmes that were *extremely* effective, it is not feasible to expect or achieve 100% effectiveness from these efforts. As such, it is imperative that the police continue to be prepared for addressing the myriad of social issues with which they may be faced when dealing with a call ostensibly about a theft, a missing person, an assault and so on.

Fourth and finally, as Bayley (1994) himself noted, honest law enforcement is impractical. Among other reasons, he cites the difficulties involved in creating 24/7 non-police responses to prevent and respond to crime and disorder both preventatively and as they happen. More importantly, perhaps, he argues that many within public policing are aware of their shortcomings when it comes to addressing crime and, in some instances, have taken reform-oriented steps to improve police responses through working with other institutions and community partners. As

a contemporary example, we might point to the creation of crisis intervention and co-response teams, which have largely been police-led efforts to collaborate with the mental health system on diverting people with mental illness away from the criminal justice system and into service settings (Iacobucci, 2014; Shapiro et al., 2015; Koziarski et al., 2021). Similarly, in the context of violence prevention, many police services have worked closely with community partners and social services to dissuade people from committing acts of violence, instead directing them into community-based initiatives that seek to act as turning points in the lives of these individuals (Braga et al., 2001; Kennedy, 2006; Braga & Weisburd, 2012). Police involvement in collaborative safety and security networks such as these not only presents possibilities for reform but allows us to re-think how we conceptualise what police should and could do. Perhaps, as some scholars might suggest, the appropriate role for police in many situations is not necessarily crime suppression, but to help mobilise information, support and resources to other nodes within these networks (Shearing & Wood, 2003; Shearing & Johnston, 2010).

Ultimately, we arrive at a similar dilemma to that facing Bayley (1994) upon examining the police mandate: the police cannot be solely relied upon to address all social issues, but the police cannot – and ideally should not – be fully absolved of the responsibility either. In his *Blueprint for the Future*, Bayley (1994) outlines a three-tiered approach to crime prevention that he argues would improve the role of the police on this front. While today's calls for police reform are too multi-faceted to be reduced to a similar tiered approach, there is one aspect of Bayley's blueprint that we, along with many of our colleagues, feel would have the most sustainable impact on police: high-quality research to inform evidence-based policies and practices. Doing so would not only increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the police but would also provide solutions to how best to address the policing end of many complex social issues.

Evidence-based policing: A blueprint for the future

Evidence-based policing (EBP) is an approach that has become synonymous with the work of Lawrence Sherman and, in particular, his path breaking article for the United States National Police Foundation, *Ideas in Policing: Evidence-Based Policing* (1998). In this article, Sherman (1998, p. 2) explicitly called for police practices to "be based on scientific evidence about what works best." What is less well known, perhaps, is that Sherman was neither alone, nor among the first to advocate for this position. Many, including David Bayley (1994), set the stage for what Sherman ultimately coined as "EBP" (see O. W Wilson, 1957; Kelling, 1978; J. Q Wilson, 1980; Goldstein, 1990). It was Bayley (p. 156), for example, who argued that "police forces must evaluate the performance of constituent units and personnel. They carry out the studies that demonstrate whether the strategies [. . .] are paying off." Further, he advocated a position with which many police reformers would agree today: that the results of rigorous evaluations should be treated as critical for determining police budgets and resourcing needs, as well as for ensuring police accountability. In what follows, we provide a brief overview of the EBP approach and pick up Bayley's reasoning to similarly advance the argument that meaningful and long-lasting police reform can best be achieved through the development and application of rigorous, independent research of "what works" and "what does not work" in policing.

In practice, EBP is informed by the following core tenets: (1) scientific research plays a central role in developing effective and efficient policing programmes, policies, and strategies; (2) the produced research must not only meet or exceed rigorous methodological standards, but also be useful for police practice; and (3) the findings should be effortlessly implemented into practice and/or policy (Telep & Lum, 2014; Sherman, 2015). This is all intended to replace experience, intuition, and craft-based thinking that is often used as the central – if not only – tool in contemporary police decision-making (Sherman, 1998, 2013). These sources of knowledge are often considered anecdotal or unsubstantiated and thus may unwittingly support the implementation or continued use of police practices that may either be ineffective or harmful to the community. This is not to say,

however, that EBP endorses the outright omission of these knowledge sources from police practice, but rather that they be supported through high-quality scientific evidence that is systematically generated by hypothesis testing (Fleming & Rhodes, 2018; Willis & Mastrofski, 2018).

The systematic testing of hypotheses is to be executed through what Sherman (2013) has conceived as the "Triple-T" strategy: *targeting, testing*, and *tracking*. *Targeting* refers to the identification of a high-priority problem onto which a strategy, programme, or policy is deployed. Said efforts should be *tested* through rigorous methods to ensure the desired outcome is achieved and *tracked* over time to ensure the desired outcome(s) continue(s). If the desired outcome(s) is/are not being achieved, the strategy, programme or policy should be adjusted, followed by the *re-testing* and *re-tracking* of the adjustments (Sherman, 2013). This process ultimately leads us to an understanding of what does or does not "work" in policing, knowledge of which can also be transferred and/or adapted for use in other jurisdictions (Sherman, 1998; Neyroud, 2015). The result of knowing what works in policing is that it encourages the police to discontinue strategies, policies, or practices that are deemed ineffective or harmful, thus leading to a more effective and efficient use of police budgets and resources, as well as the reduced potential of harm for members of the community (Sherman, 2013; Huey & Ricciardelli, 2016; Mitchell & Lewis, 2017).

Over the past two decades, acceptance of and demand for evidence-based practices in policing has grown in several countries around the globe, most notably in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Spain, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Mitchell, 2019). What makes this approach to policing both exciting as a tool for conducting actionable policing research and its potential for informing police reform is the emphasis on co-generation of research (Sherman, 2015). EBP does not simply encourage academics to instruct police organisations on how they should conduct their practice, but rather academics, policy-makers, *and* police practitioners work together to co-create, co-analyse, and co-mobilise research across information silos (Brodeur, 1999; Haggerty, 2004; Bradley & Nixon, 2009). Situating the police as "co-owners" of research and the research process is not only viewed as a necessary step to generating productive research (Willis & Mastrofski, 2018), it also increases individual and organisational receptivity towards using research-informed and evidence-based policing practices (Telep & Lum, 2014). In other words, EBP opens the door for the police to be self-critical of their current practices, why and how they have come to engage in certain practices, the true impacts of these practices, as well as how the practice of policing as a whole can move forward through a research-informed and evidence-based lens.

To date there have been several policing practices that have posted positive evaluations. For instance, the current evidence base for practices such as hot spots policing, problem-oriented policing, as well as pulling-levers policing suggests these strategies can be relatively effective at preventing or responding to various forms of criminal activity (Braga et al., 2001, 2019; Kennedy, 2006; Braga & Weisburd, 2012; Weisburd et al., 2019). Such findings, we note, also somewhat temper some of Bayley's concerns over the effectiveness of police crime prevention activities. However, as Bayley further elaborates, developing such knowledge around what is effective in policing is not only important for the police themselves so they are aware as to whether or not they are achieving their intended objectives, but it can also be a crucial component to ensuring police accountability. More specifically, he argues the public

> should be given enough information so that they know whether the police are performing well. Then they can ask the police to explain why they are not doing better. Accountability is best obtained through open processes of evaluation, not through directed policies. Embarrassment for being ineffective is a much better incentive for improving performance than inexpert opinions from the public and its political representatives (p. 155)

Unfortunately, though, efforts to move EBP beyond crime prevention have not garnered the same levels of research and/or police attention (Telep, 2016; Koziarski & Lee, 2020). This not only echoes Bayley's (p. 161) observations that "the evaluation of police performance is narrow and superficial," but also means that many, if not most, police practices, policies, and strategies – especially those as

they relate to police involvement in social issues – remain untested. As such, we are unaware of what works, what does not, and what could potentially be harmful.

Although there are many examples of untested policing practices we could choose from, we have chosen to focus on one Canadian programme popularly adopted and touted within policing circles as an example. This is a collaborative programme variously known in Canada as "the Hub model" or "Situation Tables." Introduced in Canada some ten years ago, having been imported and adapted from the "partnership working" model found in Scotland, this is a network-based approach to responding to cases of individuals deemed to be of acutely elevated risk (AER; McFee & Taylor, 2014).[3] These cases can be brought to the table by any one of the participating agencies – police, social services, mental health, and education, among other institutions and groups – for discussion and action (Brown & Newberry, 2015; Bhayani & Thompson, 2017). In jurisdictions where Situation Tables have been established, the police have spearheaded efforts in order to bring them to fruition, often supported by provincial grants (Sanders & Langan, 2018). This, in part, has been described as an effort on behalf of the police to transfer some of their most chronic cases that involve a variety of social issues to other agencies that may be more equipped to address them (Lansdowne Consulting Group, 2016).

For much of the last decade, proponents of Situation Tables have publicly extolled not only the ability of police to have means by which to re-direct cases of AER towards more suitable programmes and services, but also to achieve crime reductions and, as more than one proponent has been heard to claim, "save lives". In support of such efforts, they can point to a host of output-focused evaluations that report great success (e.g., Ingersoll Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic, 2014; Brown & Newberry, 2015; Lamontagne, 2015; Lansdowne Consulting Group, 2016). The reality is, however, that to-date, there is not a single high-quality, independent, peer reviewed evaluation of Situation Tables to substantiate these claims (Corley & Teare, 2019). Nor have any of these studies demonstrated changes in clinical or other outcomes for participants. This is not only troubling given that there over 100 Situation Tables operating in Canada and elsewhere (Global Network for Community Safety, 2016; Corley & Teare, 2019), but it also exemplifies the extremely limited role that research and empirical evidence has played within contemporary policing in Canada. We could also point to any number of programmes recently reviewed by independent evaluators and reviewers through the Canadian Society of Evidence-Based Policing's *Square 1* programme. Of the 23 current police programmes reviewed, which include bait vehicles, "Lock it or Lose it" campaigns, vulnerable persons registries, and critical incident stress debriefings, only eight have been evaluated in the Canadian context, and none have been evaluated using rigorous methods (Canadian Society of Evidence-Based Policing, 2020).

Aside from the obvious benefit of being able to identify existing police programmes which lack any empirical support, there are other potential benefits of an EBP-based or research-based approach. For one thing, EBP can also challenge hasty, showboat attempts at "reform" that in the end may undermine the goal of significant change. For instance, a common suggestion by policy-makers and police leaders when difficult or tragic events involving persons of colour occur is to emphasise the need for officers to take implicit bias training (James, 2017; Wang, 2020). To illustrate: in response to the defund movement and protests in his state, Governor Phil Murphy of New Jersey recently signed legislation to require police officers in that state to take implicit bias training (State of New Jersey, 2020). To some, this may seem like a step in the right direction; however, as most policing researchers are aware, claims made in support of implicit bias training – especially within the policing context – have little-to-no sound empirical basis. A recent study by Worden et al. (2020) with the New York Police Department, for example, found that while implicit bias training did marginally improve officers' knowledge and understanding of bias, prejudice, and discrimination, it ultimately had no impact on reducing racial and ethic disparities in enforcement actions.

Another such example are body-worn cameras (BWC). This technology has frequently been touted as a solution to improve police conduct, accountability, and transparency, among other

potential impacts (Braga et al., 2018; Malm, 2019; Saulnier et al., 2020; White & Malm, 2020). However, as Lum and colleagues (2019; 2020) have recently summarised, BWCs do not have a clear or consistent effect across many officer or citizen-related measures. Yet, police services around the world have jumped at implementing the technology, especially in light of the recent defund the police movement. For example, the Toronto Police Service (2016) conducted an internal two-year pilot project on BWCs that concluded with a recommendation to adopt the technology service-wide, but adoption seemingly stalled over concerns about cost, maintenance, and quality of the technology itself (Powell, 2016; Gillis, 2018). However, only four years later – and amid mounting public pressure to defund the police – did the Toronto Police Service at last announce adoption of the technology (Casey, 2020). Here again, creating an institutional culture in which research plays a stronger role in guiding practice and policy may help police make better informed decisions, assist in educating the public on making sound investments related to both policing and police reform, and enable the public to hold the police accountable if or when ineffectiveness is identified.

Moreover, not only does EBP provide an avenue through which the public can hold the police accountable as it relates to effectiveness, but it can also hold the police accountable in their spending. In this light, Bayley (p. 152) argues that police budgets could instead "represent an aggregation of local needs, based on evaluations of local effectiveness." In doing so, the police would not only be forced to dispose of practices that are not substantiated by the evidence – what Mitchell and Lewis (2017) term a turn to more ethical policing – but would permit more efficient use and allocation of police budgets (see also Nix & Wolfe, 2020). Consequently, the police, public and policymakers could engage in more productive discussions around police budgets in order to determine if there are excess funds that could be reallocated elsewhere outside of policing, or if there is a need to refund the police in order to expand their ability to develop and engage in evidence-based practices.

Finally, beyond holding the police organisation accountable both in terms of effectiveness and spending, EBP could also enhance the accountability of individual officers. Current accountability structures largely encourage and reward officers based on enforcement-related measures, such as the number of arrests made within a particular timeframe or the number of traffic tickets distributed to motorists (Maslov, 2015; Schulenberg, 2016). While these measures may certainly be important as they relate to crime and law enforcement, as we summarised above – and as is the focus of the defund the police movement – crime and law enforcement are not the only two items on the long list of roles that encompass the police mandate. Unfortunately, given that accountability structures currently only focus on these aspects, this may contribute to officers wanting to place a greater emphasis of their time towards duties and tasks that will enhance their individual productivity within these measures to the detriment of other issues. For instance, some studies show that police officers perceive interactions with people living with mental illness as a burden or "not real police work" (Iacobucci, 2014; Schulenberg, 2016). This, in turn, may lead some officers to conclude such interactions informally and without action, even though a diversion to a community-based mental health service may be appropriate (Schulenberg, 2016). However, broadening accountability structures to not only encompass a larger proportion of the police mandate, but also encourage EBP could lead to numerous fruitful benefits. Bayley (p. 148), for instance, suggests that officers could "be evaluated in terms of their knowledge of local needs and their ability to formulate plans that lead to a reduction of those needs," whereas more recently, Nagin et al. (2020) argue that new accountability measures should encourage community trust and engaging in community-based problem-solving. The latter in particular would allow the police and the public to co-develop evidence-based, problem-oriented approaches to address concerns expressed by the community, which in turn has the potential to further build community trust as, for example, witnessed in Camden, New Jersey. We see the development and use of problem-oriented policing and other evidence-based practices as an essential measure to police accountability because it will only reinforce the need at an individual-

level to think critically and proceed effectively when it comes to police involvement in both criminal and social issues.

Conclusion

The institution of policing is at a crossroads. Public police can either continue on their current path and wait until the next police-involved tragedy sparks a new round of public uproar, or they can heed calls for meaningful, long-term reform efforts. Indeed, as we have described, perspectives on what police reform should look like are polarised, even within the same "defund the police" movement. Sectors of this movement call for the removal of the police from social issues through divestment in the police and greater investment in preventative social services; however, by drawing on Bayley's (1994) *Police for the Future*, we show that a dilemma arises when it comes to police involvement in these issues: the police cannot be solely relied upon to address all social issues, but the police cannot – and ideally should not – be fully absolved of the responsibility either.

In light of this dilemma, drawing on Bayley – as well as the work of those who followed – we instead argue for the adoption of EBP as a more fruitful driver of meaningful, long-term reform efforts in policing. There is great reform potential with EBP in that it not only can be used as a means to identify police practices that are effective, ineffective, or even harmful, but such research can be used to hold the police accountable for ineffective efforts and to inform budgets and resourcing needs.

Unfortunately, however, with little knowledge about "what works" beyond a handful of crime prevention strategies, EBP remains in its infancy. We, therefore, call on our criminological colleagues around the world – particularly those within the policing field – to work closely with police organisations in your jurisdiction to embed evaluation and EBP into their operations. We also call on these same colleagues to engage in various forms of public criminology to disseminate the importance and reform potential of EBP to the public. In doing so, criminologists can provide the public with a clear, meaningful blueprint for police reform that they can then demand from their local politicians and policymakers, as opposed to demanding for other approaches to reform that either lack public consensus or are unlikely to come to fruition.

Notes

1. What precisely caused Floyd's death is currently disputed. One autopsy found that Floyd died as a result of asphyxiation, whereas a second autopsy found that Floyd died as a result of cardiac arrest. Both autopsies, however, ruled Floyd's death as a homicide (Donaghue, 2020).
2. A recent randomised control trial in British Columbia, Canada found that by providing one, unconditional lump sum to individuals experiencing homelessness not only resulted in treatment group participants finding stable housing faster than those in the control group, but also had more cash savings, achieved faster food security, reduced spending on certain goods (i.e., alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs), and reduced reliance on social services (Zhao et al., 2020). While such results are promising, much more empirical works needs to be done to establish a firm evidence base in support of such activities.
3. AER is a subjective " … threshold [that] combines both the degree of probable harm involved in any given situation, and the degree to which the operating risk factors involved cross multiple human service disciplines" (Russell & Taylor, 2014, p. 19).

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