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SCIENTIFIC TRAINING FOR COPS?

A. C. GERMANN

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"Scientific Training for Cops" is an anomalous phrase, and yet somehow an applicable title for a discussion of higher education in law enforcement.

Both "scientific training" and "cops" are words subject to misinterpretation. To some, "scientific training" implies an ordered body of knowledge which may be mastered by high capacity people, and which is transmitted by highly qualified instructors; to others, "scientific training" connotes any substantive material which may be presented to any group by anyone handy. To some, "cops" are persons possessing great personal integrity and capacity who have dedicated themselves to an honorable career in the public service; to others, "cops" are people of limited ability and dedication who have fled from the competition of commerce and industry to the soft sinecures of civil service. Just as there are those who have a low opinion of "cops" and a high regard for "scientific training," we would point out that there are some who hold a dignified concept of "cops," but an unrealistic concept of "scientific training."

There are an estimated excess of 100 institutions of higher learning in these United States offering programs in the general law enforcement area. If we eliminate the "short-cut" programs—the institutes, seminars, short-courses, and the like—and consider only the academic programs which lead to an academic degree, we find that there are more than 56 institutions of higher learning in 19 states offering some 128 programs. And now, if we remove consideration of the criminalistics and corrections programs, and consider but 13 institutions in 6 states that offer the bachelor's and master's degrees in the police area, we find that in the last 8 years, from 1950 to 1958, 1,504 bachelor's and 49 master's degrees have been awarded. (These figures have been extrapolated from the latest survey of O. W.

Wilson, Dean, School of Criminology, University of California.) Such figures are impressive—and we should be very proud of the 258 bachelor's and 17 master's degrees awarded by these institutions in 1958.

Because "scientific training for cops" is becoming the vogue—and popular with the public, the police, and the academician—the various programs have bloomed as rapidly as rooms and instructors could be found. City Managers are boasting of the *number* of college trained people in their police force; Chiefs of Police are boasting of the *number* of their personnel attending college classes; police personnel are boasting of the *number* of courses that they have completed; and colleges are boasting of the *number* of students enrolled in their police programs. This is most encouraging, particularly if one happens to be numerologist, or enchanted by the mysteries of raw statistics. But what is being done in these programs? What is the quality of curriculum, staff, and student? Are these schools teaching a form and practice of law enforcement which will ultimately result in lowering our ugly crime rates and increasing our police prestige? Or are our programs for the "scientific training of cops" merely serving to perpetuate questionable police attitudes and habits? Merely making anachronisms respectable by some sort of academic baptism?

Let us take a few moments to survey the current scene. It is the writer's personal opinion that there are three general types of academic police training currently presented.

The *first* type is that which is primarily concerned with the techniques and processes and mechanics of the vocation. In these programs, eminently practical, and in some areas but thinly disguised police academy programs, the student

learns *how to* operate his equipment, *how to* prepare a satisfactory report, *how to* patrol his beat, *how to* recognize vice offenses, *how to* handle a juvenile problem, *how to* write a traffic ticket or investigate an accident, *how to* protect a crime scene, *how to* testify in court, and other like "how to's." The graduates of such programs are ready, it is said, to don the uniform and make themselves immediately useful. This, some hold, is "down to earth" police training. This, others say, is nought more than a highly glorified form of recruit training. We personally feel that our police programs *must* provide for *some* degree of "how to" training, for it is a fact that only the very largest police agencies have highly developed in-service training programs for the recruit; and it is a fact that entrance to the service is only at the lowest level where such training is helpful. Yet sometimes we wonder about such a one-sided approach because so many of the graduates enter the larger agencies only to repeat the "how to" lessons; and because so many of the graduates have the capacity to master more than mere techniques. It seems almost analagous to the medical school graduate who might know how to set a fracture, how to remove an appendix, how to deliver a baby, how to give a spinal anaesthetic—but who could not diagnose a disease, recognize a psycho-somatic condition, or analyze the laboratory reports of his patients. A professional? No—a technician to serve the professional.

The *second* type of training is primarily concerned with the philosophy of law and law enforcement, theories of social control, advanced techniques of supervision and administration, and the problems of planning and research. The graduates of such programs are not as immediately useful to the police administrator as are graduates of the first type of training, yet they have a most highly developed potential for the future. This, some hold, is "ivory tower" police training. This, others say, is the only high-quality approach to law enforcement education at the college level. We personally feel that our police programs *must* provide for *some* degree of "advanced theory" training, for it is a fact, a cruel fact, that it is almost totally absent from the training given in the agency. It is a fact that if he does not acquire such knowledge and perspective while in college or university, the student may not have the opportunity presented to him again. Yet sometimes we wonder about such an exclusive approach because without the "how to" background the graduate is looked upon as a rather inept practitioner when he dons badge

and gun. Some "old timer" may have to demonstrate how to double-lock the handcuffs, thus satisfying himself and his cronies that college training is inane. It seems almost analagous to the medical school graduate who might be capable of the finest differential diagnosis, know every nuance of anatomy and physiology—but who could not read his sphygmomanometer, manipulate a dislocated joint, or apply a hemostat. A professional? No—a limited area researcher to serve the professional.

The *third* type of police training, and the type that we personally favor, consists of a proper combination of the first two approaches we have cited. It contains the elements of the "how to" program, and as well, presents the philosophy, administration, and research of the "advanced theory" program. The graduate of this type of training is able to assume, *immediately*, the mechanical and procedural demands of an agency, while at the same time retaining, and expanding, those abilities and knowledges useful to his *future* assumption of supervisory or administrative roles. Some might claim that such a program is overly ambitious, would encompass too great an area, and serve to frustrate the student. Yet others might claim that such a highly developed program is the sole path to a meaningful and useful baccalaureate degree.

We frankly feel that the "how to" courses should form the core of our lower-division offerings in a four-year program (and the entire program of a two-year city college or junior college curriculum) and that the "advanced theory" courses should form the core of our upper-division offerings in a four year program (and the entire program of a graduate curriculum).

What, one may ask, would be the course offerings of such a four year program? Table 1 sets forth the general pattern of such a program.

We think that it goes without saying that in addition to such a core, a well-balanced group of recommended electives from languages, sociology, psychology, political science, English, and speech, and a basic college or general education requirement would be incorporated. We would like to be able to point out that such a program is fully implemented at Long Beach State College, but such is not yet the case. However, in two more years, it shall be.

So much for a review of the general types of programs. We think that it might be of some interest to our readers to outline a few of the most troublesome problems facing us today in relation

TABLE 1

<i>Lower Division</i> (20 units)	
Introduction to Law Enforcement	(3 units) Required
Criminal Law	(3 ") Required
Criminal Evidence	(3 ") Required
Criminal Procedure	(2 ") Required
Criminal Investigation	(3 ") Required
Patrol Procedures	(3 ") Required
Traffic Control	(3 ") Required
Juvenile Control	(3 ") Recommended Elective
Vice Control	(3 ") Recommended Elective
<i>Upper Division</i> (24 Units)	
Scientific Aids to Investigation	(6 units) Required
Police Supervision	(3 ") Required
Police Administration I (Line)	(3 ") Required
Police Administration II (Staff)	(3 ") Required
Police Administration III (Auxiliary)	(3 ") Required
Special Problems in Police Administration	(3 ") Required
Comparative Police Administration	(3 ") Required
Industrial Security Administration	(3 ") Elective
Fire Services Administration	(3 ") Elective
Jail Administration	(3 ") Elective
Advanced Criminalistics	(3 ") Elective
Case Studies in Police Administration	(1-3 ") Elective
Police Internship Program I & II	(6 ") Elective

to collegiate police training. They fall, to our way of thinking, into six categories:

1. *Curriculum Problems.* The criterion for placing courses into lower and upper division is not standardized; nor, for that matter, is the problem resolved completely as to exactly what specific array of courses should be catalogued. The proliferation of police courses in some colleges is questionable. Peruse the current catalog for "X" College, California. The Peace Officer program leads to a certificate or to an A.A. degree in two years. Some 40 separate courses, totaling some 119 units, are offered. Yet most colleges and universities, offering four-year programs, list less than 25 courses. Why does this phenomenon exist? Probably because we have not progressed yet to the stage of standardized curricula. The careless development of curricula has resulted in manifestations prejudicial to professional development. Peruse the "Y" College Catalog for 1957-1958, and read: "Police Interrogation (3) . . . An introduction to the field of interrogation as used in criminal investigation, in the handling of suspects, victims, and informants. *Includes techniques of third degree, application of psychological pressures, hot interrogation, precepts, recognizing symptoms of guilt and related procedures. Guest speakers will contribute scientific information and general semantics.*" (Italics

added) The lack of standardized course titles, course descriptions, and course syllabi have resulted in general disorganization; and audit of course content to insure the utilization of up-to-date information is relatively rare. We would suggest that a great service could be presented to law enforcement by careful curriculum studies, and by the preparation of basic standards to be presented to the Education and Training Committees of the I.A.C.P. and state peace officer organizations.

2. *Staff Problems.* If academic respectability is to be achieved in our "scientific training for cops," the utilization of instructional staff must be rigidly controlled. Not only police experience, but the possession of an academic degree should be required. It would seem obvious that the instructors in a college police program should be equipped with, at the very least, the degree to which the students are candidates. It would also seem obvious that the staff member should be expected to do a certain amount of basic research, to publish, as well as to instruct and counsel. Yet, we must candidly admit, fully qualified instructors are scarce at the moment, and exceptions must be made, and are made, in most of our programs. We would suggest a service in the area of academic placement by making instructional availability and needs known to all instructors and to all institutions.

3. *Student Quality Control Problems.* One problem faced in the in-service training of the police agency is that of dealing with the mixed class—made up of “old timers” and relatively new personnel. This kind of problem is encountered in the academic police program which enrolls the working practitioner as well as the full-time student. It is probably true that *some* practitioners attend classes for psychological compensation, in order to fulfill needs not provided by their assignments. It is probably true that *some* full-time students attend police classes due to over-glamorized, odd conceptions of the police role, or due to the ego satisfaction to be gained from close association with the mysteries of law enforcement. Some programs seem to gear the work to the lowest common denominator—so as to retain as many bodies as is possible. Other programs are geared to high quality levels—even though the active policeman finds it very demanding to carry a 3 or 6 unit load. Quality control can be established by the careful use of college aptitude tests, by specialized testing batteries, by frequent examinations, by extensive use of assigned readings, by required term projects, by memorization, and by prepared participation in group discussion. To coddle the law enforcement student for the sake of cameradie or fat enrollments is neither fair to the student, nor to the development of a professional service. Perhaps we could work toward the development of a general written examination to be given prior to graduation which would ensure a grasp of basic materials—somewhat like the “little bar” examinations given in the law schools.

4. *Transfer Credit Problems.* Because courses are not yet standardized, students who transfer from one program to another are often, through no fault of their own, denied full credit for past work. The use of standardized curricula, and joint policy on transfer credit, would be most helpful—but would seem to lie far in the future. Currently, in California, there is a definite split of opinion on the matter of allowing credit for non-academic, non-accredited police programs, such as offered by the State Bureau of Industrial Education or by the various agency academies. A junior college committee which recently met may recommend the granting of 15 college units for completion of the Highway Patrol Academy; the state college committee which recently met may recommend that such credit be denied, and only extended to those programs which have been approved by the Western College Association for Accreditation. Perhaps

services to the various accrediting agencies to give counsel and guidance on these matters could be inaugurated.

5. *Practitioner Relationship Problems.* The academic programs—in existence for the past 35 years—have not, as a general rule, had the enthusiastic support of the police administrator; they have not had their top graduates sought after by the agencies; and they have not worked as closely together as they might—such as do the medical schools and the hospitals. Internship programs are feasible, eminently practical, and would aid both agency and student, but are largely in the minority. Agencies could provide for the reimbursement of tuition, for expeditious scheduling of assignments and shifts, in order to encourage attendance at the local colleges, but few do. The whole area of lateral entrance—whereby the graduates of the college programs could gain advanced rank and status upon entry into the service—is regarded almost as a subversive suggestion. Often the college trained practitioner is not utilized as efficiently as he could be due to jealousy or fear. Admittedly, one of the greatest problems lies in the area of human relations; some police administrators fear the candid and objective eye of the academician, and the changes they know would be forced by close association with the colleges; some academicians fear the possibilities of having the police administrator dictate curricula, course content, staff acquisitions, or quality levels. That is probably why there exists a certain aloofness that is not particularly conducive to healthy relationships. Perhaps we should encourage the participation of more of our police administrators in order to bring them into closer contact with the academician who is, in all truth, dedicated to the same goals.

6. *Problems of Service Philosophy.* We may say to each other that this “scientific training for cops” has meant that we have come of age, but what do we mean? What—as our children say—were we going to be when we grew up? Were we cradled to be what we are? Are we what we would like to be? Is there a pattern of expediency in our national police behavior? Is this what we would call maturity? Shameful or inept act piles on shameful or inept act as we scan the press, and our defense of these acts is juvenile. We say that other agencies of government are even more shameful or inept than we are, or that the shamelessness of others compels us to be just as shameful as they are. All is won save honor. Shamefulness or ineptness grown customary transcends argument and carries

us into the realm of principles. What do we really believe in? What are we really supposed to believe in? Any demoralization of our national police practices calls for a reappraisal of our national police precepts.

Do we believe in, and teach, the principle that all citizens are to be presumed and treated as innocent until proved guilty by proper trial procedure? Do we believe in, and teach, the principle that searches and seizures should be conducted precisely as outlined in the 4th Amendment and delineated by our courts? Do we believe in, and teach, the principle that admissions and confessions should be obtained without coercion or promises? Do we believe in, and teach, the principle that the laws should be enforced in a neutral, objective, and impartial fashion? Do we believe in, and teach, the principle that a police officer should be a highly trained competent expert in law enforcement? Do we believe in, and teach, that a police officer should be of absolute integrity or relinquish his office?

Do we believe in, and teach, the principle that a police agency should operate in an honest and efficient fashion, rejecting the gross political pressures of the community? We can phrase our answers to these questions in terms of the expedient—the practical—the here and now “what it is” solution, or we can phrase them in terms of principles—the ideal—the “what it should be” solution. It seems to us that facing up to such questions, and to the philosophy we espouse in answering them, is a part of any police training program which claims to be scientific, and an important part of any discussion of police training.

We honestly believe that the professionalization of the police service is a possibility; we believe this because we know many police professionals—men of the highest competence and integrity—who are setting the pace for the American police service; we in the schools can serve them and the service by installing a truly professional “scientific training for cops.”