Forward into the Past with Performance Accountability

Paternalistic expertise and the dilemmas of gender

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Abstract
Throughout the twentieth century, and now into the twenty-first century, policing has undergone several shifts in philosophy and practice. Four main paradigms, the political era, the professional reform movement, community policing, and a management accountability process called “Compstat” are examined historically from a perspective of gender. This perspective provides a backdrop from which to analyze concerns that may be raised in the adoption of innovative practices. Each paradigm of police practice has gendered images, which are used in this paper to consider the effects on people in the organization, the organization itself, and the people that the organization serves. Consideration of the effects is paramount in light of the recent adoption of Compstat-like processes in the broader field of public administration, and it appears that this latest innovation is really moving forward into the past.
Forward into the Past With Performance Accountability: Paternalistic Expertise and the Dilemmas of Gender

Recently, several cities have adopted an accountability process that was “designed to improve…performance…” (Behn, 2006, p. 332). This process, and its many variations, was based upon and mirrored a management program called Compstat, which was rapidly diffused throughout police organizations in the United States over the last several years. Compstat, an abbreviation for computer statistics, was developed during the mid-1990s in the New York City Police Department (NYPD) and was a strategy for “reengineer[ing]” the agency (Bratton, 1998, p. 224).

Compstat holds police managers responsible for identifying and addressing crime trends in their areas of command, and like the original NYPD version, similar managerial accountability processes in municipal agencies include frequent meetings held between the top staff and department directors or other middle managers. During these meetings, data is used to analyze performance and strategize future performance (Behn, 2006). These managerial accountability processes have even been lauded by some in the field of public administration: Compstat won the 1996 Kennedy School of Government’s Innovations in American Government award, while a municipal version,
Baltimore, Maryland’s CitiStat, won the same distinction in 2004 (Walsh and Vito, 2004; Behn, 2006).

While this innovative performance accountability process is gaining popularity in municipal agencies, recent evaluations of the process within police agencies have not provided the same level of adoration and praise. Allegations of falsifying crime data, and unsubstantiated claims of reducing crime numbers have left the police version tarnished (cited, with links, on www.wikipedia.com).

The first national description of Compstat and its diffusion to police agencies throughout the United States identified the “development of the control element” as the most distinguishing feature of Compstat, when considered in the framework of strategic problem solving (Weisburd, et al, 2003, p. 422). This control element of Compstat provides insight into the gendering of police agencies, since control reinforces hierarchical organizational structures, which are traditionally masculine in imagery and practice. Also, in the Compstat process, police managers are held solely responsible for addressing crimes in their areas of command, which highlights Stivers’ (2002) discussion about the masculine nature of expertise. It is therefore through Stivers’ concern about the “assertion of various culturally masculine qualities and values and the disparagement of feminine ones…and [the assumption of] a social order that disadvantages women” (p. 41) that this paper views Compstat. Compstat and its municipal variants thus raises concern about the direction of public administration scholarship and practice since many people in the field are heralding this and
similar accountability processes as worthy endeavors and have bestowed honors to proclaim as much.

This paper will first present a brief overview of the paradigms of police practice, followed by the theoretical foundation of Stivers’ (2002) work, *Gender Images in Public Administration*, as well as other feminist theory that helps to clarify the remainder of the paper, which will be a closer examination of the three most recent paradigms of police practice: the professional-reform era, community-oriented policing and Compstat. During the political era, many police agencies were decentralized and unfortunately corrupt, so a close examination did not seem to provide enough insight to warrant a separate examination. In each of the three remaining paradigms of practice, discussion will focus on the gendering of the police organization along a continuum of masculine to feminine, and the possible effects on police organizations, the individuals in those organizations, and those impacted by the activities of those organizations.

Finally, in light of the recent transference of the latest innovation, Compstat, to the broader field of public administration, the over-reliance on expertise in these types of processes will be discussed and will conclude this paper.

*The Paradigms, in Brief*

Use of the term paradigm in describing the evolution of policing in the United States seems most appropriate since each paradigm describes an example of a particular set of theories, applications and “coherent traditions”,

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which get challenged and replaced by a new set (Kuhn, 1970). For instance, let’s first look at the political era.

The political era was the time frame prior to the 1920s when few police agencies were formalized, and most of those served the political machine in those locales. There was often corruption, and with the Progressive Era came a desire to make the police a “politically-free, impersonally administered, tightly disciplined, rational legal bureaucratic…organization” (Walsh, 2001, p. 349). Thus, the political era’s practices were challenged and replaced with a new set of traditions.

For the next several decades, police agencies throughout the United States turned their focus on crime fighting as their primary mission. Technological advancements aided in the use of patrol cars, radios, and in the 1960s, the 911 system. Television portrayed police officers, mostly, as hard working, just the facts ma’am, professionals, and eventually the detachment from communities began to take its toll. The civil unrest of the 1960s and 1970s called into question the practices of the police, which led to changes in philosophy and practice. What emerged was community-oriented policing, a collaborative problem-solving model that emphasized cooperation and citizen input. Although still being practiced and advocated in many places, community policing has been repudiated by many others and in some places, Compstat has been introduced.

Before discussing the gendered nature of police organizations during these paradigms, it is helpful to outline the framework for this paper, the work of Camilla Stivers and her explanation of the dilemma of expertise. Additional
theory will be offered to add to the discussion and clarify some of the points made in later discussions.

Stivers’ *Dilemmas of Expertise*

While Acker’s (1990) theory of gendered organizations has become a classic work from which feminist authors take many clues (Hutchinson and Mann, 2004; McGinn and Patterson, 2005), Stivers’ (2005) observation that public administration still has not adequately recognized “feminisms” (p. 364) raises explicit disciplinary concern. In her work, *Gender images in public administration: Legitimacy and the administrative state* (2002), Stivers’ argues that in pursuit of legitimacy through the establishment of a profession, those in the field of public administration fail to recognize that masculinity is unconsciously embraced. Stivers intends to “articulate the harm…administrative ideas and patterns of behavior work on women…[and how the dominant, masculine gender in the scholarship and practice of public administration] (a) devalue a range of contributions and concerns that are thought to be associated with femininity and (b) limit women’s political and social freedom” (p. 5).

Stivers (2002) explores the images associated with the concept of professional in the contexts of expertise, leadership and virtue. Within her discussion of expertise, Stivers relates how aspects such as autonomy, authoritative hierarchy and brotherhood are used to create the aura of a profession. Stivers points out that the image of expertise – the objective and rational, science-based aspect of public administration - encourages neutrality and the “impersonality” of the Man-of-Reason (p. 46). Fostering the virtuous
aspect of the public servant through autonomy, the “agent of the people or for the public interest” (p. 49) has “commitment to the common good” (p. 81) by way of guardianship, honorable independence, heroism, and democratic action as a citizen. Stivers also notes that the hierarchy of authority is manifested in the creation of “passive recipients of government service” (p. 53). The brotherhood aspect of profession is the traditional and historical subculture created through a “shared set of norms” that expects “like-minded fellows” to view the profession as the priority, countering women’s role in general as the primary caregiver of children and responsible for the maintenance of the domicile (p. 56). Stivers’ point is that as public administration attempts to attain legitimacy through the establishment of professional administrators, each image, or aspect, has dilemmas of gender that, at a minimum, need to be acknowledged.

Stivers (2002) argues that “[l]eadership is an important cultural myth….an idea used to support and rationalize the continuation of existing political, economic, racial and gender arrangements” (p. 62) and its “legitimacy in the administrative state” is questionable in the defense of public administration (p. 80). Mapping the images of leadership, Stivers notes that decisiveness, control, motivation and vision are subliminally masculine characteristics that reflect a white-male business orientation, which grants to those reflective of this personification, legitimacy in the exercise of power. Ironically, Stivers points out that “much of the work of public agencies does not involve significant exercise of discretionary power but simply the execution of routine, unglamorous, but necessary duties – work much like housework, and like it, undervalued” (p. 79).
Virtue, accepted in the public administration profession as a lofty goal toward which it must aspire, is another attribute that Stivers (2002) examines. Elitism through the guardian or steward ideal is evident through the "public space [as an] historically male preserve" (p. 87). “Prudent constitutionalists”, historically engaged in the “noble passion” (p. 89) of public service, represent the seekers of fame and honor, while the democratic citizen as an actor in the public service offers a seemingly more respectable example of the public administrator.

Stivers (2002) argues that these images of expertise, leadership and virtue devalue women’s contributions to public administration, but also continue to subjugate women into roles of lesser perceived importance and thus, subsequent positions of less power and lower pay. Additionally, Stivers posits that an image of expertise as objectivity and autonomy “reduces those over whom authority is exercised to a state of dependence: Expertise depoliticizes the claims of clients, discounts the values of citizens’ views, and dissociates itself from nonprofessional workers” (p. 133). Stivers maintains that the dilemmas of gender not only be acknowledged, but that aspects more traditionally regarded as feminine be included for a fuller and more beneficial experience for the providers and recipients of public service.

Hutchinson and Mann (2004) argue for an even broader conceptualization, breaking out of the “masculine hegemony in the administrative state...[and] pressing for a new order which values multiculturalism and the gender diversity that is present in us all” (p. 93). In line with arguments for a broader context for feminisms in public administration, Administrative Theory and
Praxis provided a forum for feminist theories of public administration in its June 2005 volume. Contributions ranged from Stivers’ (2005) lamentation that there has been a systematic and pervasive ignoring of feminism in public administration, to Leuenberger’s (2005) argument that the market models adopted in public organizations have focused on efficiency versus mission, and have valued ends over means. Leuenberger claimed that by “emphasizing the value of caring labor…efficiency [is] balanced with effectiveness and equity to provide meaningful outcomes for citizens” (p. 404).

Despite “the transformation of America’s consciousness…hidden assumptions about sex and gender remain embedded in cultural discourses, social institutions, and individual psyches that invisibly and systematically reproduce male power” (Bem, 1993, p. 2). This results in a systemic devaluation of women in police agencies, even when women attempt to assimilate into the masculine culture of police organizations. The dilemma that women often face when trying to assimilate into the organizational culture that is dominated by masculinity is violating the socially-prescribed behaviors for women by exhibiting assertiveness, aggressiveness, physical capability and emotional toughness. These attributes often personify the woman as pushy or lesbian-like, rather than a colleague of equal status (Daum & Johns, 1994).

Acker (1990) identifies five interacting processes by which gendering occurred in organizations. First, division is made along lines of gender to include assignment, power and allowed behaviors. Historically, women were assigned to handle social work-related issues, which for many years continued the
segregation of women in police agencies (Rosenbaum and Lurigio, 1994; Skolnick and Bayley, 1986).

Second, symbols and images in organizations are either masculine or feminine. Images such as heroes and detached autonomy are decidedly masculine. Women struggle in police agencies with obstacles to their acceptance and success as the police organizational culture orients around masculine imagery and practices. In a post 9-11 era which personifies public safety professionals as heroes based on images of men rushing into danger to rescue the helpless, the challenge appears daunting (Sturken, 2002; Charlesworth and Chinkin, 2002).

Third, in communications, men are actors while women offer emotional support, perpetuating dominance and submission by women to men. Compstat sessions, with an emphasis on theatrics to highlight aspects of accountability, are really opportunities for men to recount their “dominance” over the enemy – crime. This is closely aligned with male bonding when retelling of “sexual exploits” or “feats of prowess” on the ball field (Gaston and Alexander, 1997, p. 48). Compstat also glorifies a confrontational approach, in contrast to the collaborative nature of many women’s communications.

Fourth, gendered identities are maintained through “appropriate work, language use, clothing, and presentation of self as a gendered member of an organization” (Acker, 1990, p. 147). Even though the “gender-neutral status of ‘a job’, and of the organizational theories of which it is a part depend upon the
assumption that the worker is abstract, disembodied...both the concept of ‘a job’ and real workers are deeply gendered and bodied” (Acker, p. 150).

Appropriate work in policing, was, and still is often gendered, reinforcing the masculine orientation of operational assignments, while other assignments such as administration, communications and staff support are usually staffed by women, and stigmatized. Administrative or inside work assignments, ironically, often work to the benefit of women who are assigned to those positions because the shift hours are often normalized, which aids in the care of children, a continually primary responsibility of women (Martin & Jurik, 1996; Stivers, 2002).

Language use in policing, such as profanity and insults, are tools for male bonding, and women’s experiences in police work often revolve around themes of discomfort due to on-going harassment, double standards, isolation and inappropriate interactions (Sheppard, 1992). As noted by More, “Women raised to be compassionate, thoughtful, considerate and motherly enter a working environment filled with pranks, profanity and violence” (1998, p. 204).

Clothing for women in policing reflects the prevailing styles for women during each era, however impractical. To be more practical and to represent the para-military mindset, uniforms are altered to fit women’s bodies.

The challenge of assimilation and existing in deeply gendered organizations adds to the stress of police work for women. Unfortunately, leaving the agency or profession is often the only solution some women find when trying to deal with the stressors of work (Martin & Jurik, 1996). This has two negative consequences for women in police work. First, women are less
represented, and second, women then acquire seniority much more slowly than their male counterparts, which is shown to influence assignment, promotion and overall job satisfaction. Recent data suggest that the number of women in large police agencies has declined, from fourteen percent in 1999 to twelve percent in 2001, and women were all but “absent” at the highest levels of police agencies, making up only seven percent of those top command positions (Wells and Alt, 2005, p. 18). In addition to the concern raised about the individual effects on women within police organizations, gendering is evident and impacts those who are served by the police, and to some degree, society as a whole.

An Overview of the Gendered Paradigms

The professional reform paradigm of practice in police agencies throughout the United States mirrored many public organizations during the Progressive Era and beyond. Men dominated public administration, the public sphere, while women took a less-publicly acknowledged role in public affairs, albeit one arguably as important (Stivers, 2000). Attributes of the masculine-oriented police organizations included rule-orientation, justice, fairness, duty in moral reasoning and independence (Kay, 1994). While the autonomous police professional seemed preferred, in practice the detachment resulted in reduced connections to the community and in some cases, abuse of citizens’ rights. In response to police abuses and the decreased legitimacy of the police, internal and external pressures caused those in the profession to alter practices to be more concerned about public perception and community participation. The outcome was a paradigm shift toward community policing.
Community policing had its emphasis on relationships, sympathy, caring, helping, interdependence, establishing rapport and building consensus, which are considered feminine attributes (Kay, 1994). Despite its tenuous definition as a philosophy or a program, and its somewhat unclear outcomes, community policing offers an avenue of voice for those outside of police organizations who otherwise have been marginalized during the professional reform paradigm.

As community policing is repudiated and in some agencies, replaced with Compstat-like processes, “[the] cultural associations between man and management also feature in ideal representations of the professional, with professionalism coming to be framed around a masculine vision of control, rationality, personal agency/accomplishment, and distant instrumentality” (Whitehead, 2003, p. 96). As noted by Magers (2004), Compstat “places more emphasis on the expert model of problem solving than the community policing concept of collaborative problem solving between police and community partners” (p. 73).

At the very least, Compstat-like processes wrestle problem and solution definition away from citizens and line staff, and places that control in the hands of expert police administrators, historically men. The rational-legal policing model of Compstat focuses on accountability through centralized bureaucratic control. The underlying belief is that the police are solely responsible for crime and disorder problems, a direct turnabout from the community policing model and its prevailing sociological assertion that the police are often not capable of apprehending the root causes of crime and disorder on their own (Magers, 2004).
As Moore (2003) suggested, using the expectations that crime reductions are the “bottom line”, equating private sector profit with the police product, raises concerns with not only how the police are spending to reduce crime, but also how the “police spend our freedom and liberty” (p. 491).

Table 1 depicts the organizational attributes of each paradigm of police practice as discussed in the context of masculine or feminine. While police organizations as bureaucratic entities have generally had similar structural arrangements throughout time, the similarities between the professional reform and Compstat paradigms are remarkable. Hence, concern is raised about adopting an innovation which resembles a practice that was previously identified as abusive and illegitimate.
### Table 1

*The Gendered Organizational Attributes of Three Paradigms of Police Practice*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paradigms of police practice</th>
<th>Professional Reform</th>
<th>Community Policing</th>
<th>Compstat</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Masculine Attributes</strong></td>
<td>Crime fighting is mission (Vila &amp; Morris, 1999; Johnson, 1985); Centralized command structure and scientific technological advances (Johnson, 1985); Paramilitary personification (Wilson, 2000);</td>
<td>Police experts control crime (McGuire, 2000; Magers, 2004); Data used for analysis is obtained via computer technology (Walsh &amp; Vito, 2004)</td>
<td>Four step process: intelligence, deployment, tactics and relentless follow-up and assessment (Walsh &amp; Vito, 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feminine Attributes</strong></td>
<td>Relationships between police and community to solve problems (Miller, 1998); Intellectual and emotional officers respond to citizen concerns (Walsh &amp; Vito, 2004)</td>
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As we now examine more closely the field of policing, a historical perspective will outline three main paradigms of police practice and the gendered patterns in each paradigm of police practice.

The History of Policing in the United States

*The Professional Reform Movement*

*The concept of the professional-reform paradigm.* Early American cities relied on members of the community to serve as watchmen to ensure order was maintained. The watchmen, who rang bells at night to proclaim all was well, had no statutory authority and the citizenry or the courts then handled any violations of law (Vila & Morris, 1999). London’s Metropolitan Police force, created in 1829 under the direction of Sir Robert Peel, became the model for American cities, serving as a guide for Boston to establish its own police organization in 1838. Many American cities soon followed with bureaucratic police organizations that became instruments of “social engineering…forces to cope with and control social conflicts and social ills that developed in the cities” (Thomas and Hepburn, 1983, p. 343).

After 1920, looking to make policing more professional and to address corruption concerns raised during the “political era” (Oliver, 2004, p. 41), reformers sought to eliminate outside political influence and concentrate on the redefined police mission: crime fighting (Vila and Morris, 1999; Johnson, 1985). The professional reform movement expanded during the Progressive Era when technological advances began to influence the practices of police agencies. The
crime-fighting image was supported by advancements in criminal identification, fingerprinting, radio communication, and rapid mobility through the use of automobiles.

The diffusion of the professional-reform paradigm. This professional reform movement continued for decades, with prominent spokesmen such as O.W.Wilson and W.H.Parker. Wilson’s ideals of complete independence from politics, a highly centralized command structure, college-educated rank and file, the application of the most modern technology, and the absolute obedience and minimal discretion at the patrolman level founded this professional reform movement. Soon, hundreds of Wilson’s students were implementing these legal-rational, reform ideals across the United States (Johnson, 1985). Like women more generally during the Progressive Era, women involved in policing were segregated, handling family problems, wayward children, crime prevention and matters commensurate with nurturing (Belknap, 2001). Although a more feminine crime prevention/social service model of the 1920s also sought to professionalize the police, it was the crime control model that dominated the policing profession for the next forty years (Martin & Jurik, 1996, p. 51).

Based on the standardization of police agencies during the professional reform movement, a police culture emerged that, despite minor variations in different localities across the United States, was reinforced both internally and externally. Internally, departments relied on regional training facilities and publications such as Police Administration, written by O.W. Wilson in 1950, with subsequent editions in 1963 and 1972, and heralded as one of the most
influential books on police administration (Vila & Morris, 1999, p. 157). Chiefs organized professionally and the International Association of the Chiefs of Police (IACP) issued model policies, a practice which continues even to the present. Externally, books, film and television created a “mass-cultural image of the paramilitary patrol cop” (Wilson, 2000, p. 97). Leonard and More noted that the “…accepted patterns of police organization follow rather closely those to be found in the military service” (1974, p. 134), which perpetuated the masculine, crime fighting orientation within police agencies and which was later modernized in the 1980s and 1990s with “wars” on drugs and “wars” on crime.

The gendered nature of the professional-reform paradigm. Women had a long, arduous battle to gain legitimacy in the traditionally male-dominated field of policing during the professional-reform era. Part of this battle included litigation and paralleled broader movements for women’s rights in the workplace. The Equal Opportunity Act of 1972, The Crime Control Act of 1973 and lawsuits involving claims of discrimination on the basis of gender, race or both influenced police agencies and the proportion of women in those agencies, especially as hiring practices related to height and weight were called into question (Decker and Huckabee, 2002). Consent decrees, court orders and affirmative action programs resulted in greater numbers of women entering and staying within police agencies (Martin & Jurik, 1996), and when women did enter into patrol work, there was a progression from “a specialized, gender-based role into genderless, general assignment” (Schulz, 1995, p. 134). Progress was slow, however, and it wouldn’t be until the late 1970s that women really started to
assimilate into operational positions in contrast to the usual assignments of juvenile and family-oriented units.

In addition to the status of women in policing during the professional-reform era, the practices during these many years emphasized the expert police professional, all of which perpetuated the masculine perception of autonomy and detachment. By redirecting the mission to crime fighting through technological advances, the scientific, rational and thus masculine orientation was glorified.

_Toward a Paradigm Shift_

The social crises of the late 1960s and early 1970s brought police practices under scrutiny. Civil rights demonstrations, racial conflicts, riots and political protests, in addition to the increased concern about crime, resulted in several studies into the state of policing. The majority of studies maintained that improvements could be made through more of the same professional reforms, such as higher education and increased rules enforced in a strict hierarchy. However, the studies began to question the police function, their accountability, and their relationship to the community (Goldstein, 1990; Russell, 1997). The professional reform movement had had a _just the facts ma’am_ attitude, which was indicative of the detached nature of police attitudes toward the public.

The President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, formed in 1967, made several recommendations, including “better deployment of personnel, establishment of better coordination between patrol officers and detectives, modernization of communication systems and dispatching procedures, and experimentation with team policing” (Repetto, 1980,
The effectiveness of professional reform policing was also analyzed through several studies, the 1974 Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment being the most notable. The long-held belief that random, motorized, preventive patrol reduced crime through deterrence was unsubstantiated. Other studies discounted the beliefs that quick response aided in capturing suspects, and that crimes were solved by reactive investigation (Skolnick and Bayley, 1986). Also, as police abuses became evident as part of the crime control model, Supreme Court decisions started to move the pendulum back toward crime prevention (Martin & Jurik, 1996). Thus, the professional reform paradigm was evaluated from many perspectives, and it was clear that change was needed in order to restore legitimacy to the police.

A result of this internal and external scrutiny, innovative and progressive thinking emerged in the 1980s. Although changes were slow, many police departments considered the possibility of doing things differently. Early attempts to address concerns about abuse and effectiveness and to restore legitimacy to policing began with team policing and the creation of community relations divisions within police departments. As noted by Crank (1994), the 1982 watershed article, *Broken Windows* by Wilson and Kelling, helped to formulate the concepts that would relate to strategic problem solving and the soon-to-be popular philosophy, community-oriented policing, often referred to as *community policing*.

*Community Policing*
**The concept of community policing.** Community policing was at its core a collaborative effort between the police and the community to address crime and quality of life concerns. Additional elements of this approach included storefront mini-stations, foot patrol and proactive involvement with community groups to establish close-working relationships (Rosenbaum and Lurigio, 1994). Even as community policing was being advocated, the underlying goal of crime control was maintained. As noted by Moore and Stephens (1991), “in terms of crime control...[the police could help] the nation’s cities deal with their problems if [the police] widened their conception of their proper functions, diversified their approaches to performing the varied functions, and organized themselves to develop strong partnerships with the communities they serve” (p. 47). This promoted the image of feminine collaborator working with the community to solve social problems over the masculine expert demonstrating his power over crime.

Community policing was a broader concept than another idea which gained popularity about the same time – problem-oriented policing, which was based in part on Goldstein’s (1990) book *Problem-oriented policing*. In problem-oriented policing, officers were expected to use problem-solving techniques such as SARA, scanning, analyzing, responding and assessing, to find underlying social problems. By identifying the root causes of crime and disorder in neighborhoods, officers could then utilize community resources such as counseling centers, welfare programs and job training facilities to address those problems.
Community policing was considered a philosophy by some and a program by others, and its implementation varied. The community policing elements of communication, collaboration and problem-solving were a radical shift from professional reform policing practices. In some cases, line-level officers were given the authority to make decisions and act in the interests of the communities they served. In other cases, community policing was simply a slight modification of the functions of officers in small public relations units already existing within many police departments. Yet, despite its nebulous definition, community policing received notoriety and funding as it was diffused in police agencies throughout the country.

*The diffusion of community policing.* Leading up to the adoption of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, police agencies had been migrating toward community policing for several years (Eck & Spelman, 1987; Scott, 2000; Zhoa, He & Lovrich, 2003). From the 1967 President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice’s recommendations to implement team policing practices, to scholarly works such as Goldstein’s (1990) *Problem-oriented policing* and Wilson and Kelling’s (1982) *Broken Windows*, a general sense had developed in the policing community that the police function needed to change. The adoption of an alternative that was intuitively appropriate seemed logical. As noted by Goldstein:

> It was clear that several insights into policing needed to be considered: that the police dealt with a lot more than just crime; that the wide range of functions the police perform were appropriate; that the criminal justice system was not the most effective way to deal with a great deal of police business; that law enforcement was only one way police get the job done;
that discretion was a reality and a necessity; and that the police were accountable to the communities they served. (p.11)

To spread innovation in the form of community policing, police agencies relied on metaphors as well as informal networks (Crank, 1994; Weiss, 1997). The watchman metaphor was a tool adopted and used by police administrators for the public to visualize a simpler time, a nostalgic stroll down memory lane to a time when “a police officer could, with skills learned through street sense and apprenticeship, solve problems without invoking the formal process of law” (Crank, p. 338). The broken windows theory of Wilson & Kelling provided images of community disorder and the breakdown of social controls that community policing could repair and restore. According to this theory, neighborhoods with uncollected trash, abandoned cars and broken windows were the breeding grounds of social disorder. By working with citizens and residents to rid their communities of these signs of neglect and decay, the police would get to the root of a community’s crime problems.

Progressive police leaders in certain states adopted innovations such as foot patrols in Newark, NJ and community substations in Houston, TX, and these isolated experiments became the source of innovation, despite the limited evaluation of these programs. According to Oliver (2004), as federal grants became available, impetus was added to the community policing movement. Many larger police agencies adopted community policing because they had greater access to information about community policing in other agencies and also because they had existing organizational structures, such as crime prevention units, into which community policing could be absorbed. In 1994,
estimated number of police agencies that had adopted community policing was 8,000, up from 300 in 1985 (p. 45).

Although it has been argued that the adoption of community policing was, from the beginning, an institutional attempt to regain legitimacy (Crank, 1994), Oliver (2004) saw the institutionalization of community policing as a distinct paradigm (or phase), which culminated in the passage of the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, also called the 1994 Crime Bill. The federal Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) was created as part of the 1994 Crime Bill, and influenced the adoption of community policing through grants and regional education opportunities; many agencies jumped on the bandwagon of community policing in response to the availability of federal grants such as “COPS Phase 1, COPS FAST, and COPS AHEAD” (Oliver, 2004, p. 47). Oliver maintained that this represented the institutionalization of community policing because it became “the most common form of organizing police services…evidenced by the fact that around 13,000 police agencies had made some effort to move toward community policing by 1996” (p. 46). It should be noted, however, that community policing was not a prescribed set of practices, and its implementation was diverse.

The gendered nature of community policing. During the community policing paradigm, police organizations adopted practices that reinforced interdependence as well as collaboration, communication and consensus-building between the police and community. These were attributes more closely associated with femininity (Kay, 1994). Thus, in adopting and implementing
community policing, the more masculine field of policing was forced to surreptitiously alter the scope of the mission - ironically, to appropriate feminine traits "as masculine traits and [reshape them] to appear powerful and desirable" (Miller, 1998, p. 157). Feminine qualities such as “peacemaker” and “problem solver” were the very characteristics that the community policing paradigm emphasized (Miller, p. 164). Thus, “community policing complicate[d] entrenched gender dynamics” (Herbert, 2001, p. 57), which, along with other factors, created an atmosphere ripe for another paradigm shift.

Despite the rapid and thorough diffusion of community policing, Zhao, He and Lovrich (2003) noted that “police core-function priorities remained largely unchanged” (p. 697). Internal resistance (Herbert, 2001) and external apathy (Rosenbaum and Lurigio, 1994) made community policing difficult to implement beyond “superficial, highly visible, and easily attainable elements” (Magers, 2004, p. 71). The difficulty within professional reform police organizations came in altering the police culture. As police administrators struggled to implement community policing practices in an organizational culture with a “robust form of masculinity”, the definition of community policing became somewhat nebulous, its effectiveness was debatable, and often, community policing was easily resisted (Herbert, 2001, p. 56). Perhaps more influential was the gendered nature of community policing, which was viewed by some as “kindler and gentler style of policing” (Magers, 2004, p. 72) and which could be considered feminine, as compared to the professional reform style of policing (Miller, 1998; Sims, Scarborough & Ahmad, 2003).
Toward Another Paradigm Shift: Compstat

The concept of Compstat. As the implementation difficulties of community policing became evident and as governmental agencies moved toward systems of performance accountability, community policing became less popular and a new innovation called Compstat was introduced. An influential police leader, William Bratton, was disappointed with the results of community policing, so he started a technology-based program of accountability in New York City in the mid-1990s called Compstat, which rapidly diffused throughout police agencies in the United States. Using computer-based technology to identify crime patterns, Compstat-like processes involve accurate and timely intelligence, rapid deployment of resources, effective tactics and relentless follow up and assessment. Compstat-like processes claim to result in crime reductions, reinforcing the idea that the police can and do control crime (McGuire, 2000). Order maintenance police practices, which focus on minor nuisance offenses that diminish the quality of life in neighborhoods, and which mandate zero tolerance for these minor offenses, have become a part of the crime control methodology. This aggressive, proactive approach is often carried out as part of broader strategic problem solving efforts.

Another significant element of Compstat-like processes is the accountability of police commanders in addressing identified crime patterns or trends. Commanders, who are brought before a panel of the top administrators to be questioned about their actions during an “inquirement” process, endure palatable tension and outright humiliation by the upper command, and face the
real possibility of elimination if they are not able to meet the expectations of the crime control philosophy (DeHaven-Smith & Jenne, 2006). Thus, Compstat-like processes incorporate “power-coercive elements” that reinforce the traditional hierarchical structure and the control from the top of the organization (Toch & Grant, 2005, p. 261).

*The diffusion of Compstat.* Unlike community policing, the diffusion of Compstat-like processes was rapid due to peer emulation, as there was no grant funding or federal mandates for the adoption of Compstat. Highly publicized crime reductions and the popularity of holding government officials accountable were reasons Compstat also received awards such as the Innovations in American Government Award from the Ford Foundation and the John F. Kennedy School of Government (Walsh and Vito, 2004, p. 57). The rapid diffusion of Compstat processes was also thought to be due to its ability to “fit very comfortably within an existing organizational culture” (Moore, 2003, p. 479), a culture that had never fully embraced community policing, but which had retained the vestiges of the professional reform paradigm.

*The gendered nature of Compstat.* As argued by Walsh and Vito, Compstat is “a synthesis of the best elements of the two earlier police administrative paradigms”, namely professional reform and community policing (2004, p. 60). In sharp contrast to this assertion, Weisburd, et al., maintain that many elements of strategic problem solving were already being implemented before Compstat gained popularity, and Compstat took center stage because it “reinforces traditional hierarchical structures of police organizations” (2003, p.2).
As claimed by Walsh and Vito (2004), Compstat incorporates elements of community policing such as concern for the quality of life of citizens; however, these problems are addressed with professional reform practices or order maintenance methods, rather than collaboration with the communities (Willis, Mastrofski, Weisburd, 2004).

While there is some debate about the essence of Compstat and whether or not it incorporates the elements of both professional reform (rational-legal) policing and community-oriented policing, those arguments miss the broader point. By holding the commander responsible for crimes in his or her area of control, there is an underlying assumption that the police are somehow exclusively responsible for crime in communities. Citizens and community leaders are not brought into a Compstat meeting and interrogated about crimes in their communities. Thus, Compstat has a hard time assigning responsibility to others not in the traditional chain of command and thus reinforces the concept of command and control, adequately dealing with crime by way of the expert police commander. Data-driven analysis in the Compstat process is reinforced with what Stivers (2002) referred to as objectivity, a “persistent assumption…of expertise…fraught with gender contradictions” (p. 43), such as the unbiased, neutral and detached male battling to control the unpredictable female.

Walsh and Vito, however, continue to defend Compstat by claiming that accountability is being mistaken for command and control. What Walsh and Vito do not point out was the basis of Bratton’s vision of “police Darwinism”, which has nothing to do with accountability, but relies on survival of the fittest, a
competitive and aggressive concept where images of forced extinction results for those who fail to achieve the goals of the top commanders (2004, p. 60).

So if there is an expectation (whether actual or perceived) that governmental actors are responsible for handling societal problems, then Compstat is right on target, and this reinforces a patriarchal perception of the role of police officials, the “experienced, educated commanders with positional and expert power” (Walsh and Vito, 2004, p. 63). The concept of expert within public administration and by extension, policing, is problematic because the “managers”, those who Walsh and Vito note were “empower[ed]” in the Compstat approach (p. 66), are, according to Stivers (2002), “deeply gendered”, and thus masculine (p. 52).

The effects

*Police Organizations*

Little research has been done about the effects of the latest paradigm, Compstat, on police organizations, other than the anecdotal presentation of dramatic crime decreases in many places where it has been implemented. There have been an equal number of news accounts quick to spotlight cases where crime stats were allegedly misreported. As crime increases, based on currently released figures, it is uncertain to what the increases will be attributed. One case study focused on a small department that had fully implemented Compstat, and the most interesting observation was that there was essentially no citizen involvement, although external information exchange was supposed to be
a big part of the process implementation (Willis, J.J., Mastreofski, S.D., and
Weisburd, D., 2004).

Women Police Officers

The numbers of women in police agencies increased consistently with
women in the workplace during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. In addition to a
more socially accepting atmosphere, litigation about hiring practices and general
workplace behaviors also resulted in more women entering and remaining in
police agencies. By 1999, women's representation in large police agencies in
the United States reached an average of twelve to fourteen percent. A 2001
figure, however, shows a slight decline to twelve percent, down from fourteen
percent in 1999 (National Center for Women and Policing, 2003).

The extent to which the revived masculine orientation discourages women
from entering, remaining and competing for advancement in governmental
agencies needs to be explored. While the findings of Sims, Scarborough and
Ahmad (2003) indicated some predictive relation between male police officer
attitudes toward women and attitudes toward community policing and traditional
policing, not enough was learned to definitively assess the relationship as it
related to the acceptance of a particular policing model.

The Citizens

The paradigms of practice explored here highlight some of the gendering
effects in the field of policing. Concern has been raised about the effects on
people within, and outside of, police agencies when the organizations exhibit a
more masculine orientation. This concern is paramount, especially in light of
historical circumstances that led people, predominantly men, in masculine-oriented police agencies to marginalize women and other non-white men, both internally and externally. As more public organizations adopt masculine-oriented accountability processes such as Compstat, consideration ought to be given to their effects on democratic process and representative bureaucracy.

Discussion

At a time when there are calls for more citizen engagement, it is ironic that processes like Compstat are gaining popularity, especially within the field of public administration (Behn, 2006). At its core, this type of accountability process assumes the expertise of the government officials. If the early research of Compstat is further supported, then it demonstrates a retreat from citizen engagement (Willis, Mastrofski, Weisburd, 2004), and leaves governance in the hands of the expert administrators.

There also continues to be the dilemma of gender with expertise, not yet resolved, and not often discussed. Stivers' (2002) description of the expert professional demonstrates that instrumental rationality continues. By viewing this latest performance accountability paradigm in the historical perspective of policing, it is easy to see that it appears to move forward into the past, regressing to a time in history when women were struggling for meaningful inclusion. One might also note that the historical period was not a very productive period for police-citizen involvement, with conflict and unrest dominating much of the time. Again, the detachment of the expert officials from the citizens seems not to be where today’s field of public administration should be heading.
References


National Center for Women and Policing (2003). Hiring and retaining more women: The advantages to law enforcement agencies.


